THE EVOLUTION OF THE EGYPTIAN POLITICAL ELITE, 1907-1921: A CASE STUDY OF THE ROLE OF THE LARGE LANDOWNERS IN POLITICS

by

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ABSTRACT

Following the British occupation of Egypt, the political influence and the economic position of the Egyptian large landowners was greatly enhanced. In 1907, a group of provincial notables and intellectuals encouraged by Lord Cromer, published the daily al-Jarīdah and formed the 'Ummah Party. The policies and ideas of the new movement were largely governed by the financial and political interests of the wealthy families in the countryside, and by their efforts to check the growing influence of the Egyptian sovereign and the increasing popularity of the radical demand of the Patriotic Party for complete independence. In the years which elapsed before the outbreak of the First World War, the 'Ummah Party not only consolidated its relative control over the provincial and national representative institutions, but also acquired a greater measure of political influence throughout the country as the numerical strength and the functions of these institutions were increased.

However, at the beginning of the War, the British authorities declared Egypt a Protectorate, placed the country under martial law, and eventually dissolved the newly-formed Assembly. Consequently, these measures

greatly undermined the political position of the 'Ummah Party and impelled its leading members to co-operate first with Sultan Husain and later Fu'ād in an effort to induce the British government to restore the earlier system of self-government.

A similar attempt was made at the end of the War, when a group of Egyptian notables and former members of the 'Ummah Party, under the leadership of Sa'd Zaghlūl formed the Wafd to advocate Egyptian autonomy. As the movement, however, rapidly gained the support of the middle and lower classes, its demand for self-government was superseded by that of complete independence. Consequently, the majority of its founding members, who were keenly interested in preserving their relationship with Britain, left the Wafd and formed the Liberal Constitutionalists Party.

CONTENTS

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I am greatly indebted to Professor P.J. Valikiotis for his constructive criticism and warm encouragement, as tutor and supervisor, throughout the preparation of this study. I also wish to thank my good friend Mr A.M. Fueling for his kindness in reading and commenting on parts of the thesis. Finally, I owe much to the assistance of the staff of many academic and government institutions in Egypt and Britain.

NOTE ON TRANSLITERATION

In transliteration I have used the system adopted in the second edition of the Encyclopaedia of Islam, with slight variations.

INTRODUCTION

This study endeavours to explain the role played by a group of Egyptian intellectuals and local notables in the political life of Egypt, during the period 1907 - 1921. More specifically, it is an attempt to discover some of the main underlying factors which determined the ideological orientation and the political behaviour of the rising native political elite, at a time when the country witnessed the evolution of political parties and the emergence of the national movement for independence. This process is examined in the light of the political and some aspects of the social conditions which prevailed in Egypt after the British occupation, and more particularly in relation to the way in which this new political elite utilised the new provincial and national institutions in its search for political dominance.

The method of study involves a discussion of the relationship which existed between the emerging elite and the occupation authorities, as well as the relationship with the indigenous class of provincial notables.[1]

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1. It is essential to bear in mind that the reference to the "class of provincial notables" is made in terms

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While recognising the informative value of approaching the development of the political outlook of the new elite in terms of the impact of European political ideas, it is, however, more important for purposes of analysis to view the question in the context of the specific relationships which this group of Egyptian political notables established with the occupying Power and with their compatriots. Equally important in this connection is to stress the point that the ideas, aspirations and policies of the group were to a large extent shaped by their deep interest in promoting their political influence in the administration through the conclusion of a new political arrangement with the British authorities.

Therefore, though the first chapter focusses on the consequences of Cromer's policy of financial and adminis-

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of landowner ship, and in terms of positions of social and political influence in the administration, the press, the free professions and the local representative institutions. Furthermore, it is important to note that in an era characterised by the rapid growthof the political and economic dominance of Western Europe over a number of developing countries, including Egypt, the political role of the rural upper classes in these areas as well as the problems which they faced greatly differed from those of the European class of landed gentry.

trative reforms in Egypt, it is not the intention of this research to present a socio-economic analysis of Egyptian society during the period under discussion, but merely to define in general terms the economic, social and political bases for the emergence of the new elite. In this context, the first chapter tries to show that the new system of Government which Britain introduced and the relative economic stability which Egypt enjoyed under Cromer, not only consolidated the financial position of the class of provincial notables but also introduced a large number of its members into the local and central administration.

The second chapter examines the wider political implications of these favourable conditions under which the new group of political notables evolved. It first deals with the question of how in the course of pursuing their own interests they came to form an alliance with the British authorities to curb the influence of the Panislamic and Patriotic movement sponsored by the Khedive; and secondly how this political stand was expressed in the writings of their principal spokesmen in al-Jarīdah and other sources, and in the policies pursued by the 'Ummah Party.

Chapter three discusses the changes in the structure

and functions of the Provincial Councils, the Shiakhat Commissions, the ᶜumda institution and the national representative bodies, which enabled the 'Ummah Party to exercise its political influence on a local and national level, in the period between 1907 and 1914. At the same time, it is shown that by the beginning of the First World War, a great number of middle landowners had also gained a certain measure of control over the provincial administration, mainly through their recruitment to the Cantonal Courts and the post of ᶜumdas, or by their election to the membership of the Provincial Councils.

The fourth chapter inquires into the sudden decline in the political power of the 'Ummah Party following the declaration of the British Protectorate over Egypt, and the dissolution of the Legislative Assembly. The emphasis, however, is laid on the growing disenchantment of the members of the Party and the Egyptian sovereign with the occupying Power, and the successive proposals which they jointly made throughout the period of the War to restore their previous political and economic privileges.

Chapter five is devoted to an analysis of the political tendencies which existed in the Wafd since its inception in November 1918, and the consequent events

which culminated in the withdrawal of the compromising faction, traditionally committed to the principles of the 'Ummah Party from the movement. It further inquires into the social and political causes of the 1919 uprising, and examines the role played by the peasants, the middle classes, and the large proprietors during and after the rebellion.

CHAPTER I

THE IMPACT OF THE BRITISH OCCUPATION ON THE ECONOMIC BASIS FOR THE EVOLUTION OF AN EGYPTIAN POLITICAL ELITE

The British occupation of Egypt in 1882 ushered a new era in the political and social development of the country. Britain's reluctance to remain in Egypt during the early years of the occupation soon gave way by the end of the 1880s to a change of attitude which came "to regard Egypt in the light of a colony".[1] This was generally a result of the growing competition among the European Powers to expand their possessions in Africa during the second half of the 19th century, but more specifically it was a consequence of the mounting Anglo-German rivalry which "was influencing British strategic thinking about Egypt".[2] But aside from the international rivalries and complications which accompanied Britain's increasing involvement in Egypt, the local scene was largely governed by the policies of the British Consul-General in Egypt. The chief task of the Consul-General was to achieve

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1. A.L. Al-Sayyid, Egypt and Cromer, London, 1968, p. 81. See R.L. Tignor, Modernization and British Colonial Rule in Egypt 1882-1914, Princeton, 1966, for an informative study on the reasons for the British occupation of Egypt.

2. P.J. Vatikiotis, The Modern History of Egypt, London. 1969, pp. 240-241.

financial solvency and to reform the administration of the country following a period of economic disruption and political instability.

Cromer believed that sound finance was the foundation stone on which the prosperity of all states rest 1. He recalled that on his arrival in Egypt he realised that the removal of the "shadow of bankruptcy" was to take precedence over everything else.[3] But the fulfilment of such an objective largely relied on his policy for the reorganisation of the machinery of the state and the proper allocation of Government expenditure to produce a favourable environment in Egypt for the encouragement of the foreign investors and local farmers.

For some years before the occupation the Egyptian economy had been largely dependent on the expansion and export of the cotton crop to Europe, notably Britain. The Khedive 'Ismaʿīl encouraged the influx of a considerable number of Europeans to finance and technically direct the process of cotton production and export, and to modernise the administration and the system of education.[4] Bearing in mind the priority of financial

3. F.O. 800/46, Cromer to Gray, 8 March 1907.

4. Vatikiotis, pp. 86-87.

recovery and aware of the financial restrictions which the Powers imposed on Egypt's spendings, Lord Cromer continued to rely on the European investors and the Egyptian landowners. Politically, however, this policy led, in the first instance, to the installation of an increasing number of British officials in the Egyptian administration, and to the consolidation and promotion of the economic interests and political position of the class of Egyptian large landowners. Simultaneously, the legislative powers of the Khedive and his control over the agricultural fortunes of the country through taxation were curbed, and his authority was confined to the administration of Muslim institutions. On the other hand, Cromer's policy towards the European residents in Egypt was determined by two conflicting considerations: the desire to rid the Egyptian administrator from the shackles of the Capitulations, and at the same time the determination to avoid incurring the hostility and suspicion of the European business community. In the last resort the latter consideration seemed to dominate the attitude of the Consul-General.

During the first twenty-five years of the occupation, Egypt witnessed the gradual establishment of British control over the administration, the consolidation of

the independent economic position of the class of provincial notables vis-a-vis the Khedive, and last but not least the decline of the political and economic influence of the traditional sovereign. The purpose of this section of our study is to outline the general development of these tendencies in the light of the predominant economic considerations, which to a great extent guided the local policies of the Consul-General.

In addition to his firm belief in the principle of the white man's burden, and apart from being a descendant of a well-known banking family, Cromer already had an intimate knowledge of the administration and finances of Egypt and India, which made his appointment to the post of Consul-General more than reasonable. First on his agenda was the urgency of the financial situation. Towards the end of 1882, Britain abolished the system of controllers and substituted it by the post of British Financial Adviser. In doing so she practically established her exclusive control over the administration of Egyptian finance, a move to which France strongly objected out without avail. In 1884, Egyptian Departments were advised to pay the balance of their receipts direct to the Treasury, instead of to the Caisse de la Dette-Publique. The Powers represented

on the Caisse protested against what they considered to be an illegal step taken by Britain, but after strenuous pressure they finally endorsed Britain's action by signing the London Convention in 1885. The Powers in London also consented to Egypt's request to negotiate a loan of L.E. 9 million to offset her deficit, and allowed the Egyptian Government to have some freedom in the allotment and expenditure of her revenues.[5] The agreement also entitled the Egyptian Government to call upon the Caisse for funds to finance any kind of expenditure which fell into a newly-defined category, but the Caisse retained the right to authorise this new category. As a result,

> "The Caisse became a barometer of the international situation, and the degree of co-operation between the various Powers and England was measured by whether they helped or killed a reform that called for mo[illegible]." [6]

However, ultimately a satisfactory settlement with France was reached in 1904, when the Anglo-French Entente removed all restrictions on the use of revenues and led to the release of a large amount of the reserve funds. The

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5. A.E. Crouchley, Investment of Foreign Capital in Egyptian Companies and Public Debt, Cairo, 1936, p. 23.

6. Al-Sayyid, Egypt and Cromer, p. 44.

agreement was later recognised by the other Powers represented on the Caisse.

Despite these successful moves towards the exclusive independence of the British Administrator in the management of the financial affairs of the Egyptian Government, the influence of the Powers still made itself felt through the Capitulations. The privileges conferred upon the European residents in Egypt, since the 16th century, gave them a decisive say in judicial and financial matters. The Egyptian Government was unable to impose on them, without their consent, new taxes. This proved to be a handicap to several attempts which were made to increase the revenues of the country. Lord Milner, in retrospect, regretted that Britain did not declare Egypt a protectorate or even a temporary protectorate. He believed that this would have led to the suspension of the Capitulations or indeed their abandonment altogether.[7] Cromer was aware of the obstacles which the Capitulations placed before the financial administration of the country, but at the same time he regarded their modification before the final agreement with France in 1904, a measure outside the

7. A. Milner, England in Egypt, 9th ed., London, 1902.

realm of practical politics.[8] He fully appreciated the vital importance of the European residents to the Egyptian economy, and was averse to any change which would provoke their opposition. However, after 1904, in an attempt to procure the confidence of the business community, Cromer urged the Foreign Secretary on several occasions to extract from the British Cabinet a declaration to the effect that the British occupation would be permanent.[9] He was at that time proposing a plan for the modification of the Capitulations. He recommended that

> "The British Government should request the Powers of Europe to vest in them the legislative power which each now exercises separately. Simultaneously with this request, a legislative Chamber should be created in Egypt for enacting laws to which Europeans will be amenable." [10]

The realisation of such a scheme would have undoubtedly given the British Government a fresh source of influence as the common capitulatory authority over foreigners in Egypt. Moreover, Britain would have acquired a potent voice in Egyptian legislation and indirectly in Egyptian administration, as only very few legislative measures could have been effected in the country unless they were applicable to foreigners.

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8. Cromer, Political and Literary Essays, Vol.I, London, 1913, p. 162.
9. F.O. 800/46, Cromer to Grey, 12 and 16 January 1907.
10. Cromer, Political and Literary Essays, Vol. I, p. 167.

The attempt of Cromer to persuade the European residents to surrender their privileges to Britain failed. His efforts early in 1907 to achieve the agreement of the European Chambers of Commerce for his scheme were unsuccessful. The Italian Chamber opposed his plan, and finally the International Chamber of Commerce in Cairo came out publicly against it [11] The matter was of such personal importance to Cromer that, less than a month before, he had privately informed the Foreign Secretary of his intention to resign his post in Egypt; he wrote to him that despite his old age and failing health he remained in Egypt to carry through the reform of the Capitulations and in order not to give the appearance of being driven out by the "Moustapha Kamels".[12] After his departure in May 1907 the political and economic situation in Egypt underwent a change and his scheme for the modification of the Capitulations was for the time being shelved.

The British authorities were also unable to effect any substantial change in the functions of the Mixed Courts, which were established in 1876 "both to mitigate

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11. F.O. 800/46 Cromer's correspondence with Grey during January 1907.

12. Ibid., Cromer to Grey, 3 March 1907.

the effects on Egypt of the privileged status of Europeans under the Capitulations and to curb the power of the Khedive; ...".[13] There was a desire to modify the working of the Courts to render Europeans liable to payment of certain taxes, but not to the extent of antagonising the foreign communities. In 1889, the Powers consented to the proposal that the Egyptian Government had the right to make bye-laws applicable to foreigners provided that the general assembly of the Mixed Courts decreed they were legal [14] In effect this meant that legislation for the European residents remained a prerogative of the Mixed Courts.

Cromer was less unsuccessful when dealing with the purely Egyptian part of the administration. The defect of ᶜUrābi and the political events which led to the British occupation of Egypt had already undermined the position of the Khedive and his local administration. It was thought that a return to the absolute rule of the Khedive would immediately involve the introduction of autocracy and intrigue, while a policy of self-rule would bring about anarchy. Lord Dufferin was entrusted with the task of devising a scheme for

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13. Vatikiotis, pp. 167-168.

14. Al-Sayyid, op.cit., p.85.

the reorganisation of the administration. Apart from spelling out the current ideas on subject races and the inability of the "childish" Egyptians to rule themselves, his report in 1883 conferred upon the executive all powers of legislation and assigned to the decisions of the Legislative Council and General Assembly an advisory role. It was thus left for the Consul-General in matters pertaining to the native population, unimpeded by the capitulations, to utilise the wide powers of the executive for the realisation of the tasks of the British occupation. Tranquility and public order was a vital issue on which the efforts of the Consul-General were concentrated. The protection of the property and lives of foreigners was, after all, one of the pretexts for the occupation of Egypt. The police force in the provinces was under the authority of the mudirs (governors of provinces) who were in charge of public order in their provinces. Gradually the force came under the control of British officers in the police department of the Ministry of Interior. British inspectors and sub-inspectors of Interior were despatched to the provinces to report on the conditions prevailing in the remotest districts. In 1891, a British adviser to the Interior was appointed. The principal departments of the Ministry, the police, prisons and sanitation were already

under the control of a British director-general. By 1895, the Ministry of Interior, for all practical intents and purposes, was under the paramount influence of the British Adviser and British personnel. Cromer observed that this tended to weaken the authority of the mudīrs, but he obviously did not contemplate in the least remedying the situation. He was more inclined to believe that

> "the total withdrawl of the Inspectors from the provinces would be attended with a serious risk that many of the abuses of the past would reappear and, generally, that great administrative confusion would arise." 15

Another area in which Cromer sought to consolidate British influence was the Ministry of Justice. Here, however, he faced the difficulty of recruiting enough Englishmen who were familiar with the French penal code to be employed in the Ministry. A change, on the other hand, in the whole judicial system itself would have inconvenienced most, if not all, of the native and foreign judges and lawyers. The appointment of two successive British Judicial Advisers in the early years of the occupation proved unsuccessful. A Belgian was

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15. Cromer, Modern Egypt, vol. II, London, 1908, p. 489.

appointed in 1887 Procureur-General, and in co-operation with Kitchener, he produced in the course of 1888 an elaborate report on the irregularities of Commissions of Brigandage. These commissions were established earlier to deal with crime in the provinces; but according to the report they proved to be incompetent, and therefore were suppressed. Cromer thus suggested strenghening the native courts by the appointment of European judges. In 1889 two additional Englishmen were appointed to the Native Court of Appeal, making in all three Belgians and three Englishmen. The appointment of Belgian judges served the double purpose of enlisting the services of qualified persons and at the same time forestalled French interference in the native courts. Finally in 1890, a British judge from the Indian service was appointed Judicial Adviser.

The development of Egypt's agricultural potential depended largely on the efficient administration of the Ministry of Public Works. The British occupation, aware of the vital importance of this department to the whole population and economy of the country, moved rapidly to bring it under its direct influence. A British Adviser was appointed in 1883, and by 1890 a net of British inspectors had covered the country to

perform the function of supervising the distribution of water. The inspectors also settled disputes over the distribution of waters and came into direct contact with the provincial officials and the village headmen. Tignor described their influence in the following words:

> "When it is kept in mind that irrigation was the lifeblood of Egypt and that those unable to procure water could not raise their crops, it is possible to understand the vast powers exercised by these officials [Inspectors of Irrigation]."[16]

The systematic transfer of the different sections of the administration into the hands of British officials led to a situation where British influence was not confined to the central departments in Cairo, but penetrated into the provinces and villages through the persons of the British inspectors of Interior, inspectors of irrigation and the British Consuls in provincial towns. Under Khedive Tawfīq, the British authorities had little difficulty in dealing with the occasional objections of the native ministers to the increasing British interference in their departments. Cromer, nevertheless, was anxious to undermine the position of the Ministers and the Khedive. In 1883 Sharīf Pasha

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16. Tignor, p. 115.

insisted on the reconquest of the Sudan, but Cromer objected on financial grounds and took the opportunity to request the Foreign Secretary to send the Khedive a message categorically emphasising that Egyptian ministers and governors of provinces should adopt the policy recommended by Britain.[17] The Foreign Secretary approved Cromer's request and Sharīf Pasha resigned. The wider impact of the incident was very significant, it established the principle that in its general policy the Egyptian Government should be guided by the decision of the British Government. In another instance, Nūbār Pasha was forced to relinquish his office as Prime Minister, as he objected to placing the police force under the command of British officers. Rīāḍ Pasha resigned the premiership when he refused to yield on the question of dissolving the Commissions of Brigandage.

Until the accession of ʿAbbās Ḥilmī to the Khedivate, the choice of Ministers did not seem to pose any difficult problem for Cromer. But when ʿAbbās on January 15, 1895 dismissed Muṣṭafā Fahmī and appointed Fakhrī Pasha, without prior consultation with the Consul-General, the latter thought it advisable to teach the young Khedive a lesson.[18] The very next day he presented

17. Cd. no. 3844 (1884).

18. Cromer, Abbas II, London, 1915, p. 24.

the Khedive with a note from the Foreign Secretary strongly asserting the right of the British Government to be consulted in such matters. The Khedive was prevented from appointing his own prime minister, and at a later date, Cromer won over the issue and appointed Mustafā Fahmī. From that time on Cromer often referred to the Ministers as "dummies" or "cyphers" thus reflecting on their absolute subservience to the wishes of the Consul-General. Furthermore, the British Advisers now sat in Cabinet meetings without formal invitation.

It is very significant at this point to note that the establishment of British political and administrative paramountey in Egypt basically served the purpose of developing the agricultural potential of the country and reorganising its financial system. Cromer, deterred by the lack of funds to spend on schemes for the extension of irrigation and the development of the cotton crop, and by the obstructive tactics of the Powers, urged his Government at home to negotiate the London Convention. The measure of control which he had already acquired over the Ministry of Finance enabled him to divert part of the loan, sanctioned by the Powers to make good Egypt's deficit, to the use of the Ministry of Public Works. This portion of the

loan "was without doubt, ... destined for the reconstruction of the Delta Barrage",[19] under the supervision of the British Adviser, Scott-Moncrieff. The Barrage which was put into operation in the summer of 1891, provided a large amount of extra summer water in the Delta and increased the cultivated area in Beheira and Charbia Provinces.

The Aswan Dam was completed in 1902; it increased the supply of water for summer use in the Delta and extended cultivation to a great area of land along the fringes of the Delta. The construction of the Dam was at first hampered by the restrictions on the reserve fund, but in 1898 the Government was able to avoid this obstacle by signing a contract with a British firm. The contractors accepted payment by instalments and the effect of the agreement was similar to a 30 years loan of £2 million at about 6% interest. In the same year a Barrage at Assiut was also finished and it allowed the conversion of extensive areas from basin to perennial irrigation in Middle Egypt. The Daira Saniya Company took over from the Government in 1898 and by 1907 the Daira had actually reclaimed and sold some 300,000 feddans.

19. Crouchley, The Investment of Foreign Capital ..., p. 23.

Between 1897 and 1906, the Domain land under the direct control of the Government and a British Director-General was able to sell some 85,000 feddans. Foreign land companies were encouraged to invest in reclamation and drainage schemes. The first Financial Adviser to Egypt estimated that between 1884 and 1908 more than £11 million was sunk in irrigation projects.[20] Lord Milner, in describing the weakest point of the severe British financiers who controlled the destinies of Egypt, wrote: "The Finance Ministry, while turning a deaf ear to other claims, showed from the first a certain leniency to the demands which were made upon it in the name of irrigation."[21]

Following the extension of the cultivated area and the development of the irrigation system, heavy expenditure was incurred in other departments of the administration for the import of supplies and material to cope with the expansion of cotton production and the increase in trade. In 1883 an office under British direction was established in London for the inspection of railway materials bought in Britain and the Continent

20. A. Colvin, The Making of Modern Egypt, London, 1906, p. 292.

21. Milner, p. 87.

for the use of the Egyptian State Railways Department. After 1896 the office was charged with works for other Government departments of both Egypt and the Sudan. However, because of the lack of funds, the Government encouraged railway companies to buy concessions. This led to the extension of the Government line of railways from Qena to Aswan by the Qena-Aswan Railway Company formed in 1895. Another line was built between Ismailia and Port-Said and was run by the Suez Canal Company. In both cases, aware of the importance of controlling communications and revenues from these enterprises, the Government re-purchased the concessions. Similar concessions were given to the Egyptian Delta Light Railways Company for introducing agricultural railway lines in the Delta. The set of standard gaug railways in 1877 comprised of 1519 kilometers, and increased by 1913 to 2593. In 1902, there were already over 1000 kilometers of light agricultural railways chiefly in the Delta and Fayyoum, and by 1914 they had increased to some 1400 kilometers. In 1913, relative to its population and inhabited area, Egypt was well provided and better off than most countries in the world with its net of extensive railway

communications.[22]

The management of the increasing export of the cotton crop initiated the improvement of transport by the means of building agricultural roads. These were financed by local taxation in the Sharqia and Daqahlia provinces, and later were extended to Beheira and the rest of lower Egypt. Between 1890 and 1899 over 2000 kilometers of such roads were built.

The period following the signature of the Anglo-French Entente up to 1907, was one of heavy expenditure by the Government especially on drainage and irrigation, railways and telegraphs, but mostly on railways.[23] Other measures were taken by the Egyptian Government to provide for the protection and increase of the cotton crop. Between 1885 and 1889 the corvee (forced labour for public works) was abolished. Previously the burden of this tax fell wholly on the agricultural workers and small peasents, but its abolition was chiefly inspired by

22. C. Issawi, "Asymmetrical Development and Transport in Egypt, 1800-1914", (ed.) W.R. Polk and R.L. Chambers, Beginnings of Modernization in the Middle East, London, 1968, pp. 383-400.

23. See the annual reports of the British Consul-General for the years 1905-08.

the desire to release a greater number for agricultural labour. Crouchley stated:

> "the abolition of the corvee for clearing out the canals, which had previously occupied a large part of agricultural labour of the country, had resulted in very large increase in the crops of the country; ..." 24

Furthermore, the provincial administration and village headmen were charged with the task of combating the cotton-worm, and Inspectors of Irrigation and Interior were despatched to all parts of the country to supervise the implementation of the directions of their respective departments. Penalties were imposed on native officials and Umdas who did not comply with the directions of the authorities. In 1905 all cultivators were compelled by a Khedival decree to report the appearance of the cotton-worm and then to take preliminary steps to combat it. In 1906 special British inspectors were sent to the provinces to ensure that the orders of the Government were carried out.[25] In 1898 the Khedival Agricultural Society was formed for the purpose of selection and distribution of seeds to the growers,

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24. Crouchley, The Investment of Foreign Capital ..., pp. 50-51.

25. E.R. Owen, Cotton and the Egyptian Economy, 1820-1914, London, 1969, p. 216.

while the Government subsidised the initial purchases of the Society.

During the period 1882 to 1907, the functions of the Egyptian Administration were mainly determined by the need to develop the cotton sector of the economy. The attention paid by the British authorities to Government Departments, the money allocated for the use of each of these Departments, and the degree of British control over them, depended largely on the part which each performed in the effort to meet this economic priority. While the British Financial Adviser was generous with the Ministry of Public Works, he refused adamantly to respond to the demand for the increase of the expenditure on public education. Moreover, while Cromer was in no mood to delay the appointment of British Advisers in the Ministry of Finance and Public Works and to effect radical changes in the budgetary system despite the objections of the Powers, he was in no such hurry to impose too promptly his control on the other Departments.

The production of cotton in Egypt was greatly dependent on two factors: the Egyptian landowner and peasant, and the European entrepreneur and European capital. The Egyptians provided the land and the labour

force, while the Europeans advanced money to the growers and the Alexandria merchants handled the yield for export. This was the general framework of the process of agricultural production in Egypt. A vital task of the British-controlled state apparatus was to act through Government expenditure as a catalyst to encourage the inflow of foreign capital to be invested in enterprises directly and indirectly related to the process of cotton production. The bulk of these investments went into the undertakings of mortgage banks, which accounted in 1902 and 1907 for 42% and 46% respectively of the total paid-up capital and debentures of companies operating in Egypt. The remaining part of the money was placed in transport companies, commercial firms, and a few industrial enterprises. The pattern of movement of foreign capital was closely related to the increasing spendings of Government on irrigation schemes, railways and agricultural roads. It was further encouraged by the growth of the cotton harvest in the 1890s to double the size of the 1880s, and by the tremendous increase of the value of the cotton crop between 1898 and 1913. Consequently there was a steady increase in the rent and value of rural and urban land and a sharp rise in the cost of living.

Another task of the Colonial Administration was to preserve harmony between the two major forces of production, namely, the Egyptian and European elements, both of which were indispensable in their own right to the process of cotton production. This was implemented by various methods, ranging from direct intervention by legislation to moral persuasion, the underlying principle being the preservation of the division of labour between the Egyptian producer and the European financier. Cromer frequently intervened to redress this balance whenever one of the elements seemed to transgress over the assigned part of the other. He also kept a watchful eye on changes in land ownership. He was strongly averse to the danger of replacement of native landowners by Europeans. He wrote in the annual report for 1904:

> "The policy of the Egyptian Government has been to endeavour to maintain the small proprietors, and whilst affording all reasonable facilities for the employment of European Capital in land development, to do nothing which would tend towards ousting native proprietors and substituting Europeans in their place." 26

Furthermore, a decree was issued enabling the growers to sell their cotton crop by contract. The purpose of

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26. Egypt no. 1, (1905), Cd. 2409.

the measure was to prevent the European merchants from manipulating the purchase prices to the detriment of the interests of the Egyptian landowners. Likewise, Cromer rejected Egyptian demands for the extension of the powers of the Legislative Council, and strongly opposed any modification which would allow local or national native representative institutions to legislate for foreigners. He envisaged the future of Egypt to lie not in the "narrow nationalism" of the native Egyptians, but rather in that of an enlarged "cosmopolitanism" which would tend to amalgamate all the inhabitants of the Nile Valley.[27] But until that could be achieved it was necessary to maintain the judicial and legislative independence of the European from the native Egyptian.

The strong desire to perpetuate the situation was often reflected in some of the basic views which Cromer repeatedly voiced on the nature of Egyptians. Although admitting the numerical inferiority of European residents, he, nevertheless, denied the existence of an Egyptian nation. He claimed that the Europeans held a large portion of the wealth, and, therefore, Egypt

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27. Cromer, Political and Literary Essays, p. 171.

belonged to them as much as it belonged to the millions of natives. He advised Kitchener in 1912, that if a scheme of representation for the Egyptian people was ever to be implemented, it should equally include the two communities. He told him:

> "National representation in Egypt in the sense in which the term is generally used is a sheer absurdity, for the very natural and sufficient reason that the Egyptians are not a nation, and, so far as can now be foreseen are not likely to be a nation, at all events during the lifetime of any person now living." 28

Cromer's attitude towards what he called the "Egyptian reformer" was again governed by the cautious policy of granting the reformer a certain measure of support, yet withholding it whenever these reforms were pushed "so far as to shake the whole political fabric ...".[29]

Equally important in the process of cotton production, apart from capital, was the part played by the Egyptian _fallāh_ and landowner. In terms of the functions they performed, they formed a dependent and integral part of the economy. On the other hand, they seemed to enjoy a

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28. F.R.O. 30/57/no.42, Cromer to Kitchener, 25 July 1912.

29. Cromer, Modern Egypt, Vol. II, p. 324.

certain measure of independence determined by their relationship to the land. To illustrate this point, it would be convenient to trace briefly the transformation of land from being state property into full private ownership.

Under Muḥammad ʿAlī, land belonged to the Pasha, and the peasant was a mere agricultural worker depending for his means of subsistence on what the state left him after the collection of taxes.[30] Muḥammad ʿAlī had full control over the fortunes of Egypt and consequently over her people. However, in 1840, the failure of the Government machine to collect the taxes,[31] and the decline of cotton prices in Europe induced him to introduce the ʿuhda system, and to entrust the large estates to high officials and members of his family.[32] Similar measures were taken during the 1840s and large estates were offered to the ruling family and high ranking officials. But Muḥammad ʿAlī and his successors

30. G. Baer, Population and Society in the Arab East, London, 1964, p. 139.

31. Owen, Cotton ..., p. 58.

32. Baer, 'The Dissolution of the Egyptian Village Community', Die Welt des Islams, N.S. Vol. VI, NR. 1-2, Leiden, 1959, pp. 56-70.

retained their influence over the new class of landowners through taxation, family allegiance, and irrigation schemes. The ruler also kept his firm grip on them by not granting them the full rights of ownership and the privileges attached to it such as: inheritance, sale or transfer. Baer states that some two-thirds to three-quarters of the ʿuhda were assumed by ʿAbbās I and incorporated in his own estate.[33] The position of the landlords remained largely dependent on the Khedive. They acted as intermediaries for the central administration in the collection of taxes and the organisation of the provinces. Under Khedive Saʿīd steps were taken in the direction of introducing some aspects of private property. In 1855 a law was enacted "according to which male descendents of a fallāḥ (and, under certain circumstances, also female descendents) acquired the legal right to inherit his lands". But, a more decisive step was taken in 1858, by which "a person who had held a certain plot of Kharādjīya land for five consecutive years, tilled it and paid its taxes, acquired irrevocable ownership of it".[34] In

33. Baer, A History of Landownership in Modern Egypt, 1800-1950, London, 1962, p. 14.

34. Baer, 'The Dissolution of the Egyptian Village Community', p. 66.

return for the security which Sa^{c}īd granted to the landholders, he imposed a system of individual taxation instead of the collective responsibility of the village for payment of taxes. In 1854 Sa^{c}īd also imposed the ^{c}ushr tax and in return full ownership was established on the large estates. Receipts from land-tax increased from roughly £1,700,000 in 1853 to £2,500,000 in 1858. From then on landowners began to acquire an independent status from the ruler. The state thus gradually lost its political and economic control over the landowners as the principle of private ownership was increasingly established. The Khedive therefore began to rely on the manipulation of taxes and the allocation of money for public works. In 1866, 'Isma^{c}īl, unable to raise new loans, proposed in February to levy an additional tax of 5 piastres per feddan. In April the figure in question rose to 10 piastres, and in July the proposed increase was 20 piastres.[35] He instituted a Legislative Assembly to vote in the new tax. This measure was taken partly to impress the Powers, but it was at the same time a clear indication of the growing influence of the new

35 D.S. Landes, Bankers and Pashas, New York, 1969, pp. 259-260.

class of landowners. Though the majority of the members of the Assembly at that time were the yes-men of the Government, a few years later, as the number of dissatisfied landowners increased and the influence of army officers began to appear, the Assembly came to assert itself in a more independent manner from the Government. Under 'Isma^{c}īl the system of taxation was greatly tightened up as the Khedive's financial difficulties accumulated. The Muqābala law of 1871 enabled the owners of kharājīya land to be freed from half their tax liability for life on payment of six years' tax in advance, and gave them further rights in the direction of full ownership.[36] However, under the pressure of heavy taxation the condition of a large number of small peasants became untenable. Owen estimated that the land lost by the fallahīn to the larger estates "during Isma^{c}il's reign may have been considerably in excess of 300,000 feddans".[37] The wealthy landowners were continuously alienated from the Khedive by the policy of heavy taxation and autocratic rule which he and his successors adopted at a time when, in their own right, the landowners had

36. Baer, Population and Society ... , p. 139.

37. Owen, Cotton ... , p. 148.

attained relatively independent social and economic status.

During the period of ᶜUrābī's advent to power, their representatives in coalition with the officers and _Ulemā_ class headed by such men as Sultan Pasha, ᶜUmar Luṭfī and 'Ismaᶜīl Rāgheb, formed one of the leading political forces, which displayed great political influence in the struggle against the authority of the Khedive, and the events leading to the British occupation.[38]

It would appear that as Egypt from 1837 moved rapidly towards its almost total integration as an agricultural unit in the European commercial system, the ruler's authority over the country gradually declined. The more 'Ismaᶜīl borrowed from abroad the more his control over his subjects weakened. At first, when he was the sole landowner, his power in the country was almost absolute, but when under the increasing pressure of his debts he was gradually forced to relax his hold on the land, and increasingly depended on the new emerging class of landowners, his influence decreased. He became more dependent on the land-tax for the payment of his European creditors, and the

38. Al-Sayyid, Egypt and Cromer, p. 6.

civil and military administration, and for expenditure on irrigation schemes. Consequently, the land was transformed from being the monopoly of the state, passing through several intermediary stages, and ending as the private property of landholders. At the same time, this new class was increasingly asserting its independence from the Khedive. A final break occurred when the Khedive unwisely persisted in the use of his somewhat worn-out policy of heavy taxation.

Under the British occupation the authority of the Khedive to impose taxes was withdrawn and the colonial administration took matters into its own hands. Cromer fully realised the importance of safeguarding the interests of the landholders against the Khedive's mismanagement of the finances of the country. Measures to increase the land-tax if taken, would have provoked the discontent of the Egyptian element in the process of production, and would have consequently undermined the economic system. Low taxation, therefore, became one of the cornerstones of Cromer's policy in Egypt and the Sudan. He wrote that:

> "in the absence of ties, such as community of race, language, religion and social customs, the only link between the governors and the governed is to be found in material interests, and amongst those interests by far the

> most important is the imposition of light fiscal burthens. I hold, therefore, that the political conditions with which we have to deal are such that all other considerations must yield to the necessity of keeping taxation low."[39]

As a matter of fact, throughout the years of Cromer's stay in Egypt, the land-tax remained almost static. The revenue of the Government from the land-tax in 1881 was something like L.E. 4,881,000 and in 1907 it did not exceed L.E. 4,916,000. The benefits accruing from the determined effort of Cromer to increase the cotton production were not only confined to the foreign investors, but were also enjoyed by the Egyptian landowners. As already mentioned, the gradual abolition of the corvee released a large number of peasants to be employed on the land. The irrigation and drainage schemes and the improvement of communications in the provinces, all contributed to the increase in the area under cultivation and to the development of the system of irrigation. Furthermore, during the 1890s the position of the landowners was consolidated when all differences between the kharājīya and ʿushria land were finally abolished, and "Thus the twentieth century found the agricultural land of Egypt held with full ownership rights (mulk), and no miri land remains".[40]

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39. Cromer, Abbas II, from preface p. xxii.
40. Baer, Population and Society ... , p. 140.

However, these developments appeared to benefit some more than others. Changes in landholdings and the increase of the cultivated area during the years 1898 to 1907 tended to favour the wealthier category of native landowners of 50 feddans or over. There was an increase in native holdings of roughly 304,000 feddans, while some 128,000 feddans were lost by the medium-size properties of 5 to 50 feddans to the small landowners of up to 5 feddans and to the large estates. Thirty-seven per cent of the area involved in these changes and others such as the sale of 400,000 feddans between 1897 and 1906 by the Daira Saniya and State Domains to the wealthier proprietors and the ordinary transactions involving the purchase, sale, or inheritance of land, was acquired by the class of large landholders. The remaining proportion mainly through inheritance became divided among the increasing number of small proprietors. However, though the greater portion reverted to this latter class, the benefits were apparent rather than real. In 1898 the small proprietors appeared to be better off than in 1907, since the average holding per native landowner decreased from over 1.5 feddan to less than 1.2 feddan. On the other hand, despite the law of inheritance, the average holding

of the larger proprietor increased from 160 feddans to over 164 feddans. During the same period, the average holding of the middle class fellāḥ slightly decreased, but more important was the tendency of the medium-size estates to break up into smaller and smaller properties, because of the law of inheritance and to a lesser extent because of purchases by the richer landowners. Landholdings of up to 5 feddans of the total area owned by the native Egyptians increased from 23.4% in 1898 to 27.6% in 1907, those of 50 feddans or over from 37.1% to 38.1%, while holdings between 5 and 50 feddans decreased from 39.4% to 34.2%. In the Gharbia province where the greatest increase of cultivated land was registered more than 54% of the increase went to the upper class, 6% to the middle class and 40% to the poorer peasants. In the Fayyoum 80% of the absolute increase in cultivated area and changes in landholdings reverted to the rich peasants, and the remaining 20% to the small Fellāḥīn, while the total area of the medium-size estates decreased. Daqahlia, Minia and most of the other provinces showed the same patterns of change in the distribution of cultivated land among the three categories of landowners. In 1907,

large estates formed 40% of the privately owned land in lower Egypt belonging to the natives while the medium and small properties formed 32% and 28% respectively. In Upper Egypt estates of 5-50 feddans formed 40% of the area owned by the natives, the remaining 60% was equally divided between the other two classes of landowners. The distribution of landownership between various sizes, thus showed that there was greater concentration of large estates in Lower Egypt and especially in the cotton-growing provinces, while in Upper Egypt the dominant category was that of the middle landowners, with the exception of Minia and Fayyoum. The lot of the large proprietors was further enhanced by the facilities afforded to them by foreign investors. They became almost the exclusive clients of mortgage companies and banks. In his annual report for 1894, Cromer stated that over 70% of the borrowings from mortgage banks were secured on properties of fifty feddans or over.[41] The minimum loan of the Credit Foncier was fixed at L.E. 200 and the advances on securities by the National Bank of Egypt increased from L.E. 1 million in 1901 to L.E. 3,500,000 in 1906.[42]

41. Egypt, No. 1 (1895), Cd. 7308.

42. National Bank of Egypt, 1898-1948, p. 34.

Again, as for the National Bank, "like all other commercial banks, its business consisted mainly in financing the cotton crop by advancing to large growers, merchants, and exporters".[43] The greater part of these loans was used for additional purchases of land. Between 1900 and 1904 the total increase of the area of cultivable land amounted to 160,139 feddans. Apparently 104,474 feddans of this increase were bought by the bigger landowners.[44] It was around this time, in April 1903, that Sa^{c}d Zaghlūl bought some 168 feddans in the Beheira province at L.E. 53 a feddan.[45] While Aḥmad Luṭfī al-Sayyid's father could afford in 1906 to buy his son 450 feddans.[46] Names of prominent and wealthy landowners such as ^{c}Alī Pasha Sha^{c}rāwī, Ḥassan Pasha ^{c}Āsem, Hassan ^{c}Abdel Rāziq and Maḥmūd ^{c}Abdel Ghaffār, appeared in 1906 on the lists of administrative councils of several land companies which they jointly ran with Europeans. Being the primary bene-

43. C. Issawi, Egypt: An Economic and Social Analysis, London, 1947, p. 31.

44. Egypt No. 1 (1905) Cd. 2409.

45. Zaghlūl's Memoirs, 10 April 1903. (This information was found on a loose paper in notebook 27.)

46 A.A. Fahmī, Hadhihi Ḥayātī, Cairo, 1963, p. 51.

ficiaries of the commercial and agricultural expansion which Egypt witnessed under Cromer, many of them were consequently able to move from the provinces to live in Cairo and Alexandria, leaving behind either a Nāẓir or a member of their family to supervise the work on their estates.

The fortunes of the other classes of landowners, on the other hand, were declining. Apart from the decrease in the average holding of the small fallāḥ, a large number of the members of this class were dropping out to become agricultural labourers. In 1907, the number of men engaged in agricultural works in Egypt was 2,258,000. The bulk of this rural population was either engaged in the cultivation of land taken on lease, or was employed as agricultural workers, farm servants, etc.[47] Cromer repeatedly drew attention to the grave economic and political consequences of the situation. In 1906, he warned that, as the rapid increase in rural population was not matched by a similar rate of increase in the cultivated area, there was a risk of class conflict between landlords and tenants similar to that of India and Ireland. He proposed that,

47. Ministry of Finance, The Census of Egypt taken in 1917, Cairo, 1921, p. 380.

> "The best way to postpone this strife, as also to mitigate its intensity, should it eventually prove to be inevitable, will be to avoid the adoption of measures which will tend towards the disappearance of the small proprietor."[48]

Cromer was strongly averse to the displacement of small proprietors by large landowners, more so if the latter were of European nationality. One of his main concerns was to preserve a sizeable area of land for the mass of small peasants in order to avoid, rightly or wrongly, having on his hands a peasant uprising. He undoubtedly realised that such an eventuality would disrupt the whole economic system. He took special interest in the creation and development of the Agricultural Bank of Egypt, founded in 1902 with the object of advancing money to small cultivators. The greater part of the advances were secured by mortgage on land. In 1907, 22,594 loans amounting to a total of L.E. 217,133 were secured against promissory notes signed by the small fallāḥ, at the same time the sum of L.E. 1,309,127 was put out to 24,487 borrowers against mortgage. The former loans ranged from L.E. 0.5 to L.E. 20, and the latter from L.E. 10 to L.E. 500 with an average of L.E. 9.5 and L.E. 53.4 a loan respectively.[49]

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48. Egypt no. 1 (1907) Cd. 3394.

49. F.O. 368/284, Gorst to Grey, 20 March 1909, Enclosing a note prepared by the Financial Adviser entitled: 'Memorandum regarding the Agricultural Bank of Egypt'.

Assuming that the loan required by a small farmer often fell between L.E. 10 to L.E. 20, it was therefore very probable that the greater part of the money was received by farmers of medium and large-size properties. The small proprietor, thus, remained the victim of the moneylender and the exorbitant rate of interest which he charged. On the basis of the information compiled by a Commission appointed by Kitchener in 1912 to investigate the debts of this category of small peasants, it was found that the weight of approximately L.E. 16 million had been borne by the poorest class in Egypt.[50] Despite the heavy borrowing of the Egyptian fellāḥ from the usurer, the decline in his average landholding, and the increasing number of landless peasants, the number of owners with 5 feddans or less still continued to increase. This was mainly a result of the fragmentation via inheritance of some of the medium and small-size holdings, the purchase of small parcels of land with the money borrowed,[51] and the sequestration of

50. Egypt no. 1 (1914) Cd. 7358.

51. F.O. 368/284. The Financial Adviser wrote: "The Agricultural Bank has furnished statistics as to the purpose for which loans were asked during three months of 1908: 20% is said to be for the purchase of land, 44% for payment of debts, probably incurred in great part for the same purpose. It is in fact admitted that a large proportion of the bank's output has been devoted to the purchase of land."

land in lieu of a debt by the moneylender only as a last resort. In addition to this, the expansion of the cultivable area and the heavy expenditure on irrigation schemes tended to absorb the increase in rural population and afford a large number of them opportunities of work ir the provinces. During the period 1897 to 1907, the movement of population from the countryside to the towns slowed down. Baer observes that, with the exception of a few agricultural centres favoured by agricultural growth during that decade and the influx of Ottoman subjects, Greeks and Italians into Cairo, all other towns, "declined either relatively or even in absolute numbers of inhabitants".[52] Evidently the system of agricultural production fostered by Cromer showed great capacity to incorporate into its own confines some of the negative aspects of the agrarian question. It provided the necessary conditions for its own self-perpetuation as well as the environment to resolve peacefully the internal social and economic contradictions which arose.

However, the drawbacks to this economic system, and,

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52. Baer, 'Urbanization in Egypt, 1820-1907', (ed.) Polk and Chambers, Beginnings of Modernization ..., p. 166.

therefore to the economic and political position of the landowners lay in external factors. Fluctuations in the price of cotton in most cases followed the American cotton crop, and the country had little control over the changes in the value of its major source of income. What is more, the increase in foreign capital invested in Egypt only added to the country's indebtedness to foreign creditors. The favourable balance of trade was insufficient, with the exception of the war years, 1915-1919, to pay the interests on loans and the Public Debt. The deficit was only made good by further borrowing from abroad.[53] Thus, the country's economic fortunes became more and more vulnerable to changes lying outside her immediate control. In this respect the economic crisis of 1907 was a case in point.

To conclude then, the urgency of the financial situation prompted the Consul-General on his arrival in Egypt to seek through the establishment of British predominant influence over the administration, the achievement of political and economic stability in the country. Gradually, key Government Departments relevant to the development of the agricultural potential

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53 Crouchley, The Investment of Foreign Capital ... , p. 195.

of Egypt came under the control of British administrators and the greater portion of Government expenditure was allocated to drainage and irrigation schemes. This led to the encouragement of the inflow of foreign capital which financed the process of cotton production and export, while the native Egyptian provided the land and the labour. The large landowners were the main beneficiaries from the policy of agricultural growth; they were not only able to increase their land holdings, but also to secure the full rights of private ownership over their estates and so end the traditional interference of the Khedive in taxation. The class of provincial notables which owed its newly-acquired position to the occupation authorities, became the natural ally of the British Consul-General and the principal supporter of the Jarīdat 'Ummah group. Furthermore, it formed the economic base for the emergence of a new Egyptian political elite, which acquired some of the powers previously held by the Khedive, and exercised for a number of decades a profound influence on the development of Egyptian political thought. On the other hand, the political authority of the Khedive gradually declined as his influence over the administration was systematically taken over by the British authorities.

CHAPTER II

THE POLITICAL AND IDEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND FOR THE EMERGENCE OF THE 'UMMAH PARTY

Cromer recognised the limitations which the Capitulations, the Muslim institutions, and the judicial system imposed upon his powers in Egypt. Up to 1904, France exploited its capitulatory privileges to protect the interests of its nationals in Egypt, but more often to cause political embarrassment to Britain in the wider context of the clash of interests between the two countries in Africa. Seeking to undermine the British position in Egypt, France gave Khedive 'Abbās and the 'Patriotic Movement' a great deal of encouragement. However, despite the implicit acceptance of the British occupation in 1904, France retained her rights to interfere in Egypt's legislative measures which involved French nationals. Thus, in 1908, the French opposed proposals for the increase of the house-tax in Cairo and rejected the scheme for the reform of the system of land registration. Gorst urged the Foreign Secretary to make representations to the French Ambassador in London, and added, "I should be quite satisfied if the French gave us the support which we get from the Germans".[1]

1. F.O. 800/47, Gorst to Grey, 17 May 1908.

But by then, the European diplomatic situation was changing rapidly. New difficulties superseded the old ones which the agreement with France had removed. The possibility of war with Germany and Turkey came to be regarded as a contingency which must be considered. In October 1906, the War Office instructed the Commanding Officer in Cairo to prepare a plan for the utilisation of the forces under his command in case of an external aggression against Egypt.[2] Germany now began to cultivate its relations with the Khedive and the Egyptian nationalists. Cromer noted the considerable anti-British activities which the Oriental Secretary at the German Agency was promoting in concert with Muṣṭafā Kāmil.[3] The Deutsche Orient Bank in Egypt, founded in December 1905, granted loans to the Khedive, and to some of the leading native members of the Egyptian Government, on exceptionally generous terms.[4] Among those to whom loans were made were Sa^{c}d Zaghlūl, at that time Minister of Public Instruction, and his brother

2. F.O. 141/396/no. 294, W.O. to Officer Commanding, 19 October 1906.

3. F.O. 371/59, Cromer to Grey, 28 February 1906.

4. F.O. 368/1508, McMahon to Grey, 10 November 1916, transmits note by a former manager of the Deutsche Orient Bank.

Fathī, the Undersecretary of Justice.

However a relatively more disconcerting and persistent external threat to Britain's position in Egypt came from Turkey, whose Sultan was not only the nominal suzerain of Egypt, but what was more important the religious head of all Muslims. At the instigation of the Ottoman High Commissioner in Egypt Muslim sentiment was stirred. Cromer reported:

> "The day before yesterday several mullahs of influence preached sermons in the mosques calculated to inflame Moslem sentiment, and then proceeded to visit Moukhtar Pasha and reported what they had done."

Cromer added that only the Khedive could put an end to such proceedings as two of the most violent sheikhs were connected with the religious institutions which the latter directly controlled.[5]

In their opposition to Britain in Egypt, the Foreign Powers largely relied on the local support of the Khedive and the nationalists, whose joint political and social influence had greatly suffered since the British occupation. In 1882, Britain had claimed that her intention in Egypt was to restore the authority of

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5. F.O. 371/65, Cromer to Grey, 22 April 1906.

the Khedive and to establish public security and order. Later developments indicated, however, that in effect, the policy of the Consul-General tended to replace the influence of the Khedive by that of the British Occupation. Nevertheless, the authority of the occupation for practical and political reasons could not be extended to the administration of religious establishments and Waqfs. Cromer refrained from overtly attempting to introduce a radical change in the administration of Muslim institutions. He believed that the consequences of such a measure

> "would be extremely impolitic, and, moreover would probably result in failure. The British reformer, therefore, being partly convinced of the uselessness of attack and partly impelled by political necessity, turned aside from Mohammedan law reform." 6

The Khedive thus retained his direct control over religious institutions. During the first decade of the British occupation, Cromer did not encounter any serious difficulties from these institutions, because Khedive Tawfīq realised that he owed his position to Britain and, therefore, proved to be very amenable to the advice of the Consul-General. But with the accession of young

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6. Cromer, Modern Egypt, Volume II, p. 515.

ʿAbbās to the Khedivate, Cromer's troubles began.

The political influence of ʿAbbās was predominant in matters related to the Waqfs and the Azhar. The private and public Waqfs included a large area of cultivated land administered by a Director-General "who in practice takes his orders from the Khedive".[7] The Khedive endorsed the appointment of the overseers (nāẓirs) to these estates and at the same time manipulated a large amount of the revenues derived from them. Cromer remarked that, when ʿAbbās first became Khedive, the latter's attitude towards the ʿulamā and religion was one of indifference. During 1894-1895, however, encouraged by the emergence of the Patriotic Party and the support of the Colonial Party in Paris, his attitude underwent a change. ʿAbbās "began to show himself in the light of a Moslem ruler", and, with funds from the public Waqfs, he effected repairs of mosques, founded schools and increased charitable endowments. At the same time he freely spent from private Waqfs and applied for his own purposes the influence he gained over judges of the Sharīʿa Courts.[8] Until 1906 a great number of the Kuttābs (village schools attached to mosques)

7. Ibid., p. 270.

8. F.O. 371/67, Cromer to Grey, 13 June 1906.

in the villages were financed from the Waqfs' funds.[9]

The Azhar, on the other hand, was the oldest institution of religious learning in Egypt. Between 1882 and 1906, the number of the Azhar students ranged between 8,000 and 10,000.[10] The main functions of the institution during that period was to provide teachers of Arabic language, Sharī^{c}a judges, and instructors in Islamic theology. Financially, the Azhar relied on donations from rich individuals, notably members of the Khedival family, and on a constant income from the Waqfs. By tradition, since the time of Muḥammad ^{c}Alī, the appointment of the Rector of the Azhar was a prerogative of the Khedive.[11] The sovereign, therefore, by virtue of his almost absolute control over the revenues of the Waqfs and the administration of the Azhar, exercised a great deal of influence over the class of ^{c}ulamā' in Egypt. The independent influence of this class had however declined since the advent of Muḥammad ^{c}Alī to

9. H. Ammar, Growing Up in an Egyptian Village, London, 1954, p. 207.

10. M.A. El-Eycun, Al-Azhar, Cairo, 1949, table on page 85.

11. F.A. Al-Zawāhirī, Al-Siyāsah we Al-Azhar, Cairo, 1945, pp. 27-28.

power, when the ᶜulamā' lost their role as the intermediaries between the ruler and the people.[12] This was accompanied by a decline in their economic position. According to Baer:

> "previous to modern development many religious functionaries amassed capital as multazims. However, after tax-farming had been abolished few religious functionaries continued to be large landowners." 13

The ᶜulamā' became increasingly dependent for their well-being on the revenues from the Waqfs and consequently on the discretion of the Khedive. However, under the patronage of the Khedive they continued to fulfil their educational and judicial functions. In 1907, the number of those involved in works related to Muslim institutions was approximately 105,000,[14] while the total number of the members of the public administration and the army and police did not exceed 86,000.[15] The

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12. A.L. Al-Sayyid, 'The Role of the ᶜUlamā' in Egypt During the Early 19th century', (ed.) P.M. Holt, Political and Social Changes in Modern Egypt, London, 1967, p. 279.

13. Baer, Population and Society ..., p. 216.

14. Ministry of Finance, Census of Egypt Taken in 1917, Cairo, 1921, p. 400.

15. Ibid., p. 398.

young Khedive did not refrain from utilising the men and funds at his disposal to assert his authority vis-a-vis that of the Consul-General.

Another political movement which emerged during the 1890s to antagonise the British occupation was the Patriotic Party, under the leadership of a young Egyptian lawyer, Mustafā Kāmil. In the early years of the occupation, the British authorities were involved in the task of reforming the administration. The Ministry of Justice was the main branch of the administration which was capable of absorbing the growing number of educated Egyptians. The unfamiliarity of the British authorities with the French Penal Code and the desire to avoid incurring the hostility of the native and European members of the legal profession, led it to satisfy itself with the services of a large number of Egyptian lawyers. A further opportunity of employment in the administration was offered to them by the creation of the Native Courts in 1884. By the end of the 1880s "a stream of graduates of schools of law began to flood the judicial and law professions".[16] The majority of them were graduates of the Khedival School of Law and the French School of Law founded in 1891, while others

16. Fahmī, p. 54.

studied in Europe. Their influence "was by no means confined to the law, but permeated the whole structure of society. In particular, it was from this group that an enormously high proportion of the politicians was drawn".[17]

With the growth of a large group of professional lawyers a feeling of national independence and a mood of resentment against the British occupation began to manifest itself among a new generation of young intellectuals. A combination of factors contributed to the gradual emergence of this attitude. Amongst them was the indignation at the appearance of the pro-British newspaper al-Muqattam,[18] the resentment of British interference in the administration and notably the appointment of a Judicial Adviser in 1890,[19] and last but not least the ministerial crisis of 1893.[20] The combined effect of these factors led by the beginning of the 1890s to the independent appearance of a group of young lawyers

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17. J.N.D. Anderson, 'Law Reform in Egypt, 1850-1950', (ed.) Holt, Political and Social ..., p. 216.

18. A.R. Kelidar, Shaykh ʿAlī Yūsuf, Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, London University, p. 41.

19. Milner, pp. 131-132.

20. A.R. Al-Rāfiʿī, Mustafā Kamil, 4 ed. Cairo, 1962, p. 36. See also Chapter I, pp. 25-26.

to act as the spearhead of the new Patriotic movement.

Earlier, however, in 1889, Sheikh ᶜAlī Yūsuf, an Azharite who at the time "was a man of no particular means or social standing" published a daily al-Mu'ayyad. Upon its inception it was patronised by the Prime Minister, Riāḍh Pasha. As the Premier's relations with the British authorities ran into difficulties al-Mu'ayyad moved from a position of moderation to vigorous attack against the British. Finally, in 1892, the newspaper became the mouthpiece of the Khedive, and remained so until the death of its editor in 1913.

Al-Mu'ayyad's appeal centred on some of the ideas of Pan-islamism disseminated a decade earlier by Afghānī and ᶜAbduh. The reformers of the 1870s were seeking to combat the tyranny of the ruler and the external cultural and military threat from Europe. They set themselves to the task of restating in modern European terms the traditional concepts of Islamic thought. Hourani observes:

> "In this line of thought maslaha gradually turns into utility, shura into parliamentary democracy, ijmaᶜ into public opinion; Islam itself becomes identical with civilization and activity ..." 21

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21. A. Hourani, Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age, 1798-1939, London, 1962, p. 144.

To repel the imminent European threat, they advocated the solidarity of the Muslim community and the co-operation of its members.[22] The political significance of this doctrine was that, "The tendency to support and defend the Ottoman Empire ... became a basic element in the thinking of the Egyptian pan-Islamists".[23]

Driven by his hostility towards the British occupation, Sheikh ᶜAlī Yūsuf continued in the tradition of the earlier reformers to assert the authority of the Ottoman Sultan, but in contrast to Afghānī and ᶜAbduh, he tended to defend what he regarded as the constitutional rights of the Khedive.[24] At the hands of the editor of al-Mu'ayyad Panislamism lost the inspiring force which lay behind the works of Afghānī and ᶜAbduh. The principle of the regeneration of the Muslim community gave way to the reassertion of the traditional rights of the Egyptian sovereign. The demand for independence appeared not to be made with the intention of saving the rights of the Egyptian nation from falling into the hands of the British, but for the purpose of reinvesting political power in the person of the Khedive.

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22. Ibid., p. 118.

23. Kelidar, p. 83.

24. Ibid., p. 160.

Al-Mu'ayyad expressed the ambitions of the Khedive in Panislamic terms. In that form they were more appealing to Muslim sentiment in Egypt, and secured the support of the Ottoman Sultan. Moreover, it was highly unlikely for the Khedive to make his appeal in terms alien and contradictory to the religious nature of the institutions which formed the bases of his authority in the country.

The Khedive received further support from Muṣṭafā Kāmil and his associates. In 1893, Laṭīf Salīm Pasha had formed a secret society, but he was superseded by Muṣṭafā Kāmil as its leader. This society had among its members, ᶜAbdel Laṭīf Ṣūfānī, Maḥmūd Anīs, Ḥassan ᶜĀsim, Muḥammad Khulūṣī, Ḥassan ᶜAbdel Rāziq, and Muḥammad Farīd.[25] The majority of its members were in their early twenties and, with the exception of Ṣufānī and Khulūṣī, they were all lawyers. The membership of the group was not stable and changed constantly, and Kāmil in 1897 reorganised the group.[26]

In the early 1890s the Khedive realised the impact

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25. A. Goldschmidt Jr., "The Egyptian Nationalist Party: 1892-1919", (ed.) Holt, Political and Social ..., p. 311.

26 J.M. Landau, Parliaments and Parties in Egypt, Tel-Aviv, 1953, pp. 108-109.

of Kāmil's movement on the rising generation of Egyptian intellectuals and, more particularly, the students in Cairo. In 1895 he sent Kāmil to France to agitate against the British occupation, and to rally European public opinion against Britain.[27] However, despite the close relation between the Khedive and Kāmil, the latter in many instances exercised a certain measure of independence from the policies of the Khedive. This was perhaps governed by Kāmil's genuine attachment to the principle of complete independence. When the Khedive appeared to succumb to Cromer's pressure after the Fashoda incident,[28] Kāmil showed a greater tendency to lean on the support of the Sultan. In 1899 he was awarded the grade of Mutamāyiz in Constantinople and a few years later the Sultan made him a Pasha.[29]

At the same time, Sheikh ʿAlī Yūsuf began to restrict Kāmil's access to al-Muʾayyad, which led the latter to publish his own newspaper, al-Liwāʾ. The

27. M. Anīs, Safahāt Matwiyya min Tarīkh al-Zaʿīm Mustafā Kāmil, Cairo, 1962.

28. Goldschmidt Jr., p. 318.

29. M.H. Haykal Tarājim Misriyya wa Gharbiyya, Cairo, 1929, p. 152.

Anglo-French Entente in 1904, further widened the gulf between the Khedive and Kāmil, and the Khedive's part in marrying the Naqīb al-Ashrāf's daughter to ʿAlī Yūsuf put an end to the relation between the two.[30] The Anglo-French agreement also strengthened Kāmil's belief in the necessity of self-reliance and the advisability of supporting the Ottoman Empire in its struggle against the European powers. Thus in 1906, Kāmil supported the claims of Turkey during the Aqaba Affair, while the Dinshwai Incident resulted in a reconciliation between the Khedive and Kāmil.[31]

The Patriotic movement led by Kāmil and the Pan-islamic trend represented by al-Muʾayyad, formed the two wings of the nationalist movement during the first twenty-five years of the British occupation. The former, though in many instances subsidised by the Khedive, retained a measure of independence which enabled Kāmil to assert his leadership. Unlike the Azharites and the editor of al-Muʾayyad, Kāmil's movement in the final analysis was neither an integral part of the religious institutions nor a palace creation. The Khedive later stressed the fact that "Kāmil only

30 Farīd's Memoirs, Notebook no. 1, p. 1.

31. Ibid.

belonged to himself".[32]

The call for evacuation and complete independence captured the imagination of the students. Kāmil's message was simple and straight-forward. He did not appeal to the intellect, but to the conscience of the youth and the sentiment of the idealists. He advocated the achievement of independence by the spread of national education, unity of social classes and the co-operation of Muslims and Copts.[33] He did not, however, evince a particular interest in Egypt's social problems.[34] Drawing the attention of Egyptians to social differences would have undermined one of the corner-stones of his policy - national unity. Moreover, the rapid development of agricultural production during the years 1882-1907, and the apparent advantages which the country seemed to enjoy from it, tended to conceal the misfortunes of the lower classes.

More significant, however, was the fact that the majority of Kāmil's followers, including Kāmil himself and Muḥammad Farīd who succeeded him in the leadership of the Patriotic Party were members of well-to-do urban

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32. Khedive's Memoirs, Al-Misri, 18 May 1951.

33. Al-Rafiᶜī, Mustafā Kāmil, pp. 265-266.

34. Landau, p. 119.

families. Their connections with the countryside where the magnitude of Egypt's social problems were most glaring, were indeed very slight.

Out of thirty members of the first National Council of the Patriotic Party only four were provincial notables. The rest were ex-Government officials, Cairo notables, lawyers and members of the liberal professions.[35] The majority of them lived in towns and particularly Cairo. In the final analysis, regardless of the social origin of its leading members, the Party attracted a number of educated Egyptians and enjoyed the support of the student population. However, its misfortune, especially after Kāmil's death in 1908, was its inability to utilise effectively this support in the form of a massive political organisation. The new Consul-General did not fail to note that, on the day of Kāmil's funeral, students in Cairo abandoned their schools "en masse", and a great crowd of people of the lower middle-class, minor Government employees, and small shop-keepers joined the procession. With some satisfaction, he reported:

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35. A. Sfer, Essai sur les Origines et le Development du Nationalism Egyptien, unpublished manuscript in Wingate's Papers, box no. 107.

> "It is worthy of notice that almost everyone taking part in the procession wore a tarbush, the turban being rarely noticed, which shows that, although Mustafa Pasha exercised extensive influence among the Effendi classes, his propaganda had so far produced no perceptible effect on the agricultural class of which the majority of the population is composed." 36

The movement was only able to exert some influence on the course of events however when it joined hands with the Khedive. This was clearly indicated during the Aqaba and Dinshwai Incidents. But when the Khedive either bowed to British pressure or willingly co-operated with Cromer's successor, the movement lost much of its impetus.

In the early 1890s the political allegiance of the generation of Egyptians seemed to be undetermined. Men like Luṭfī al-Sayyid who later became the managing editor of al-Jarīdah was, in 1897, closely associated with Kāmil and the Khedive. Ḥassan ᶜAbdel Rāziq, the eldest son of the deputy-Chairman of the 'Ummah Party was, in 1893, a member of Kāmil's secret society. Ḥassan ᶜĀṣem, another member of the society, shared the political views of al-Jarīdah group.[37] Even Saᶜd Zaghlūl, who owed his prominence largely to Cromer's

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36. F.O. 371/449, Gorst to Grey, 16 February 1908.

37. A.L. Al-Sayyid, Qissat Ḥayātī, Cairo, 1962, p. 96.

support came twice to the rescue of the conservative Muslim newspaper al-Mu'ayyad.[38] However, towards the end of that decade the majority of Egyptian intellectuals appeared to identify themselves with one political movement or the other. The influence of ᶜAlī Yūsuf among the conservative majority of Azharites was predominant, while Kāmil attracted a large section of the urban intelligentsia. On the other hand, the greater number of ᶜAbduh's followers were drawn from the provinces where they had spent their childhood and part of their youth and where their families at the beginning of the 20th century still resided. They included among them, Fatḥī and Saᶜd Zaghlūl, Luṭfi al-Sayyid, ᶜAbdel ᶜAzīz Fahmī, and Ḥusain Haykal. ᶜAbduh's influence was greater among the higher ranks of the legal profession, teachers in the higher Government schools and heads of Government departments.[39]

The revolutionary zeal of ᶜAbduh to combat the military and political influence of Europeans seemed to give way, after the defeat of ᶜUrābī's movement, to a more conciliatory attitude towards the British occupation. On the other hand, he and his followers firmly opposed

38. Kelidar, p. 49.

39. C.C. Adams, Islam and Modernism in Egypt, London, 1933, pp. 206-207.

any measure which might extend the Khedive's authority. ᶜAbduh's Islamic teachings lent themselves to two diametrically opposed trends of thought. His emphasis on the purity of the Hadīth and Qur'ān led some of his disciples to more conservative conclusions, while his stress on reason and the necessity of modern change led others to adopt some of the basic tenets of secular liberalism.[40] But perhaps the greatest influence which ultimately determined the political outlook of the pan-Islamists, the liberal secularists, and the patriots, and inspired their policies was the impact of the social and political changes which resulted from the British occupation of Egypt.

ᶜAbduh returned from exile in 1888, when Khedive Tawfīq "acting under British pressure, pardoned him, and made him a judge".[41] He was resolved to achieve gradually religious reform with the help of the Consul-General He centred his efforts on the reorganisation of the Azhar and the Sharᶜīa Courts. Consequently he

40. For an excellent study of ᶜAbduh's political thought and the different schools of thought which were inspired by ᶜAbduh's teachings, see: M.H. Kerr, Islamic Reform; and Vatikiotis, Chapters 9 and 10.

41. Cromer, Modern Egypt, Vol. II, p. 179.

proposed the adoption of a more liberal method of teaching in place of the obsolete practices of the conservative ᶜulamā', and advocated the reorganisation of the administration and finances of the Azhar.[42] In 1895, he and Sheikh ᶜAbdel Karīm Salmān were appointed Government representatives on the Administrative Committee of the Azhar. The conservative majority of the ᶜulamā' class and the opposition of the Khedive proved, however, to be unsurmountable obstacles to his attempts at reform. ᶜAfāf Luṭfī al-Sayyid has observed that "Only the material reforms were successful, for the ulama were more interested in their material welfare, than in the spiritual fare they served."[43] In 1899, ᶜAbdul became the Muftī of Egypt and automatically appointed a member of the Superior Council of Waqfs. As Muftī, he proposed an elaborate report for the reform of the Sharīᶜa Courts.[44] He advised the Sharīᶜa Judges not to restrict themselves to the imitation of rigid and blind forms of traditional Islamic teachings, but to seek the understanding of the essence of Muslim law. He urged the Ministry of Justice to exercise closer

42. J.M. Ahmed, The Intellectual Origins of Egyptian Nationalism London, 1960, pp. 36-37.

43. Al-Sayyid, Egypt and Cromer, p. 110.

44. M. Abduh, The Reform of the Sharīᶜa Courts, (ed.) M.R. Rida, Cairo, 1900.

supervision over the workings of the Sharīᶜa Courts.

Undoubtedly ᶜAbduh's proposals were basically dictated by his genuine conviction that the remedy against Egypt's decline was through the revival of Islam which motivated the majority of its population. However, the political implications of his recommendations not only aimed at altering the status of the Muslim Institutions and ᶜulamāʾ class, but also implicitly threatened to undermine the authority of the Khedive. The suggestion to place the Azhar under the administration of the Public Instruction Department, and the proposal to bring the Sharīᶜa Courts under the closer control of the Ministry of Justice could only provoke the Khedive's enmity towards ᶜAbduh. This feeling was reciprocated by ᶜAbduh's opposition, while on the Council of the Waqfs, to the policies of the Khedive in the use of the waqfs' funds.[45] Cromer on his part, being unable to bring into line the functioning of the Muslim Institutions with other Government Departments, sought to exert his influence through the mediation of ᶜAbduh and his followers. And as the Khedive persisted in the use of these institutions in a manner detrimental to British interests, Cromer became increasingly more dependent on

45. Al-Sayyid, op.cit., p. 150.

ᶜAbduh's group. But it was obvious that in such an alliance, the dominant partner would naturally be the British. From a British point of view, the ultimate political significance of the group was to check the growing influence of the Khedive and to provide for the growth of an indigenous political force which would counter politically and ideologically the Panislamic and anti-British sentiment. This did not prevent the members of the group from levelling a number of criticisms against Cromer's restrictive educational policy. But these mild manifestations of dissatisfaction with the occupation did not threaten the foundations of the British presence in Egypt. In avoiding raising some such critical issues as complete independence and evacuation in the name of political realism, they were in fact playing into the hands of the occupation. Cromer described them as "the natural allies of the European reformer".[46] Some of their prominent leaders went so far as to condone the British occupation of Egypt.

Before the publication of al-Jarīdah, Fatḥī Zaghlūl was perhaps the most important policital theorist of the group. He was born in 'Ibiānah, a village in

46. Cromer, op.cit., p. 180.

Gharbia province and belonged to a rural family with a tradition of local leadership. He received his early religious instruction at the village kuttāb and moved later to Rashīd and then to Cairo for his higher education in Government schools. In 1884, he was sent on a Government educational mission to France where he studied law and returned in 1887 to enter Government service in the Ministry of Justice. He owed his promotion to higher positions in the Ministry to the influence of the British authorities. His merit lay in the fact that he introduced to the Egyptian reader translations of major European works in the fields of law, philosophy, education and politics. The translation of Rousseau's Social Contract and Bentham's Principles of Legislation was intended to guide the mind of the educated Egyptian to a definition of the relationship of the individual to different social groups and to the state.[47] On the other hand, his choice to translate Demolin's A Quoi tient la Superiorite des Anglo-Saxons and le Bon's Spirit of Society and Secret of the Evolution of Nations was intended to draw the attention of his compatriots to the basic weaknesses of Egyptian society. Fathī's

47 Vatikiotis, p. 222.

belief in his educational message and his sincere desire for reform were the chief considerations which inspired his works.

However, in the light of the close relation which existed between ᶜAbduh's followers and Cromer and the political role entrusted to them, the works of Fatḥī gained another dimension directly related to the political situation. In the introduction to the translation of Demolin's book, Zaghlūl stated that his purpose was to draw the attention of the Egyptians to the causes of the decline and retrogression of Egypt.[48] He wrote that the Egyptian society suffered from a weakness in all the fundamental elements which contributed to the progress of a nation. This weakness led its inhabitants to almost absolute reliance on the Government for their material and social well-being. In doing so, he claimed, the Government was overburdened by tasks which lay outside its competence. He argued that the functions of the Government should be confined to the following: "The maintenance of public order, the implementation of justice, and the encouragement of agricultural development, free trade and industry." Zaghlūl then asserted

48. A.F. Zaghlūl, Sirr Taqaddum al-Inglīz al-Saxoniyyīn, Cairo (undated), /Introduction written in 1899/.

that the failures of the Egyptians led to their subjugation to the interests of the British. But this was not the fault of the British, he wrote: "It is God's law in his creation that knowledge dominates ignorance and strength overcomes weakness ..." He urged his readers to compare the superiority of the British with the inferiority of the Egyptians. The political significance of Fathī's views in the context of the conflict between the Patriotic and Panislamist movement on one side and the British on the other, was indicative of the pro-British position of ᶜAbduh's group.

In describing at length the weaknesses of the Egyptian society, Zaghlūl was in effect endorsing Cromer's rejection of the concept of Egyptian nation. At the same time, his conservative interpretation of the basic functions of the state was an attempt to defend the administration from the attacks against it by al-Mu'ayyad and the nationalist press. But perhaps most interesting and significant was his direct reference to the British occupation. Here, the occupation of Egypt, and indeed the phenomenon of colonialism, was not only regarded as an inevitable relationship between the knowledgeable and the ignorant, the strong and the weak, but also a legitimate condition sanctioned

by God's divine laws.

The translation of Demolins inspired another Government official and a junior member of ᶜAbduh's group to publish in 1902 a book entitled: The Present State of the Egyptians or the Cause of Their Retrogression.[49] Fatḥī Zaghlūl introduced the book and endorsed without reservations its conclusions and contents. The author, Muḥammad ᶜUmar of the Post Office Department, dealt basically with the same themes which Zaghlūl had raised. He exposed the moral and material decline of the three major social classes of the Egyptian Society, namely, the poor, the rich, and the middle class. The regeneration of the Egyptian nation, he claimed, lay in the revival of the solidarity of the rich class, which began in the family unit and then spread to the neighbours. This solidarity then extended through education to all members of the social group (al-Jamᶜiyah), and finally through the religious bond t the whole nation.[50]

Considered in the context of the then existing political situation, the book had great political significance. It was dedicated to the Prime Minister, and any reference to the Egyptian Government was made

49. M. ᶜUmar, Ḥādir al-Miṣriyyīn 'Aw Sirr Ta'akhkhurihum, Cairo, 1902.

50. Ibid., pp. 9-11.

only in apologetic and complimentary terms. The British occupation was rarely mentioned, and even in the exceptionally few cases when it was, the author came to its defence. Even the widely accepted criticism of Cromer's educational policy in Egypt was blamed, not on the British, but on the wealthy Muslims, who, unlike the Copts and Europeans, did not take enough interest in the promotion of education.[51] He believed that the nationalists who were advocating the evacuation of Egypt if they would only read the works of the well-known Egyptian historian, al-Jabartī on 18th and 19th century Egypt "they would realise their mistake and praise God for their present fortunes".[52] Like Fathī Zaghlūl, he did not favour Government interference in trade, industry, or agriculture. He argued that, precisely because the Government before the occupation took upon itself the task of industrialisation that the present indifference of Egyptians to industry existed.[53] While refraining from blaming the Government for the defects of the civil administration, he did not exercise such self-restraint when discussing the Azhar, the Waqfs

51. Ibid., pp. 115-116.

52 Ibid., p. 167.

53. Ibid., p. 150.

or the Sharīᶜa Courts. Indeed, he poured his criticisms on all grades of the ᶜulamā' class, the waqfs' administration, and attacked the Panislamic and Patriotic press. He averred that religion was a matter for individual conscience, a relation between man and God, which should be separated from social relationships which are a function of civil society.[54]

Another member of ᶜAbduh's group whose works provoked tremendous political controversy, was Qāsim Amīn. His book The Emancipation of Women, published in 1899 "provoked about thirty books and pamphlets written in opposition", and led the Khedive, the ᶜulamā' and Muṣṭfā Kāmil to combat his ideas.[55] The following year, Amīn published his second book, The New Woman, in reply to his critics. The starting point of Amīn was the same as that of ᶜAbduh, Zaghlūl and ᶜUmar, that society was in decline and its regeneration lay in strengthening the moral ties of the family. However, Amīn emphasised that in this process the role of the woman was fundamental because she was involved in both the relation between wife and husband, and mother and child. A. Hourani noted that in his second book Amīn shifted his appeal from the Qur'ān and Hadīth to the "social thought

54 Ibid., p. 186.

55. Ahmad, p. 47.

of the modern west, ...". In other words, Amīn, like ᶜUmar, "dissolved the relationship established by ᶜAbduh between Islam and civilization, and created in its place a de facto division of spheres of influence".[56]

The views of ᶜAbduh and his disciples, in part, reflected the political alliance which existed between them and the Occupation. On the other hand, by virtue of their social background and their close association with the rising rural class of notables, the group increasingly came to represent in a relatively articulate form the political and economic interests of this class. The gradual development of this tendency became more obvious after the publication of al-Jarīdah, but the early seeds were being sown with the increasing success of Cromer's agricultural policy. During the 1890s the large landowners fully realised the benefits accruing to them from British rule. As far as they were concerned, the achievements of Cromer were not confined to agricultural development, but extended to administrative and political revival. Cromer increasingly drew upon the members of this class to fill the higher posts in Government Departments, schools, and the legal profession. With the decline in the powers of the Khedive and the

56. Hourani, pp. 167-169.

growing influence of the class of provincial notables, local political power began to shift "away from the older Turco-Egyptian aristocracy, notables and religious leaders to the new groups of professionals, rich cultivators and administrators, ..."[57] ᶜAbduh's group reflected in their political and social works some aspects of this change. Despite the inconsistencies and the contradictions which their works contained, a tendency nonetheless in the direction of expressing the growing influence of the emerging native class was noticeable by the end of the 19th century.

While in exile, ᶜAbduh argued that religious solidarity was the element which strengthened the bond between all members of the community.[58] In describing the process of the regeneration of society he did not assign any special importance to the role of social or professional groups, but merely emphasised that the individual's performance contributed to his own personal good and to the interest of the society as a whole.[59] A few years later, while in Beirut, he drafted a note

57. Vatikiotis, p. 209.

58. M.R. Ridā, Tārīkh al-Sheikh Muhammed ᶜAbduh, Vol. 2, 2nd Ed., Cairo, 1951, pp. 249-258.

59. Ibid., p. 269.

on the reform of religious education. Influenced by Plato's Republic, he proposed three programmes of religious education to coincide with the professional and social division of the society into the class of commoners (Ṭabaqat al-ʿĀmah), the politicians (including army officers, judges and administrators), and the ʿulamāʾ class to which he assigned the task of moral guidance and religious instruction.[60] Finally, in 1900, while advocating the reform of the Sharīʿa Courts, he accorded the family ties and the family unit a function which he seemed earlier to have assigned to religious solidarity and to the individual. He wrote: "A people /al-Shaʿb/ are constituted of families. The basis of every nation /ʾUmmah/ rests upon its families, because the whole does not stand without its parts."[61]

These rare and dispersed remarks which ʿAbduh made in a way mirrored his growing awareness of the part which some influential families in the provinces were playing in the social and public life of the country. In 1899, ʿAbduh had become a member of the Legislative Council. Undoubtedly, his association with the heads of prominent families such as: Suleimān, Shaʿrāwī, ʿAbdel Rāziq and

60. Ibid., p. 511.

61. ʿAbduh, The Reform of the Sharīʿa Courts, p. 3.

others, and his realisation of the immense local influence they possessed could not fail to impress him. It was this particular emphasis on the family as the basic unit of national regeneration which inspired Amīn's and ᶜUmar's works. Fatḥī Zaghlūl was even more explicit in defining the crucial importance of the upper classes to the whole nation. He wrote:

> "The passing away of the upper classes is like the perishing of the soul from the body. They are the defenders of ethics and tradition and the personification of the life and feelings of the nation." 62

Zaghlūl pointed out that the existing material and moral decline of the rich was transmitted to the middle and lower classes, and consequently to the whole nation. He claimed, that only the efforts of the wealthy Egyptians were capable of achieving national revival.[63] With ᶜUmar the tendency was more articulate and consistent. He approached the question of Egypt's decline on the lines of the socio-economic division of society, and maintained that the regeneration of the nation emanated from the solidarity of the rich. He also defined the middle class as being the real working element of the body

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62. Zaghlūl. Sirr Taqaddum ..., p. 38.

63. ᶜUmar, pp. 5-6.

of the nation and the link between the upper and lower classes without which no progress could be achieved.

The impact of the growing political and social influence which the wealthy Egyptian families acquired under the British occupation, led ᶜAbduh and his associates to shift their emphasis away from the individual to the family and ultimately to the _aʿyān_ (notables), or as Luṭfī al-Sayyid frequently described them in _al-Jarīdah_ "The representatives of those who have a real interest in the country".

Unlike the Patriotic Party, ᶜAbduh and his group advocated the gradual introduction of the Egyptian nation to independence rather than revolutionary change. Furthermore, as Muṣṭafā Kāmil increasingly displayed his pro-Turkish sentiment after the Fashoda Incident and the Anglo-French Entente in 1904, members of ᶜAbduh's school of thought tended to shift their appeal from religion to secular notions of solidarity and utility. This particular change of attitude at the beginning of the 20th century did not, however, alienate the leading old generation of provincial notables who were very much entrenched in the Islamic tradition of their environment. They continued to lend their support to a secular movement not because a radical change in their thinking

habits had occurred, but because that movement provided the ideological weapon which undermined the pro-Khedival Panislamic movement.

It would appear that towards the end of the 19th century an alliance between the large landowning class and the British authorities was established. Cromer found in this class the natural supporter of his policy of agricultural expansion and administrative reform. He installed a number of its members in Government Departments and representative institutions (Provincial Councils, Legislative Council, General Assembly, etc.), to act as intermediaries for the occupation whenever for political or practical reasons it was thought inadvisable to appoint British administrators.[64] Members of ᶜAbduh's school of thought reflected the interests of this alliance in ideological and political terms. They emphasised the weakness of the Egyptian nation while pointing out the great achievements of the occupying Power; they endorsed Cromer's economic policy and refrained from criticising the Egyptian Government or the occupation. On the other hand, they demanded the reorganisation of the religious institutions

64. See Chapter III, on the development of local institutions under the British occupation.

which formed the basis of the appeal and powers of the Khedive. To counter the Panislamic and independence movement which threatened to undermine the political and social foundations of the society, they tended to establish their political doctrine on secular rather than religious notions and introduced the concept of evolutionary change as opposed to revolutionary methods of achieving independence. However, after the departure of Cromer, this alliance was partially disrupted, and the disciples of ᶜAbduh became the spokesmen of the 'Ummah Party, or better known among its adversaries "Hizb al-'Aʿyān", (The Party of Notables).

Up to this point the purpose was to sketch a general outline of the political and social forces which operated in Egypt during the first twenty-five years of the British occupation. The intention now is to discuss the impact of the events which led in 1907 to the transformation of these local forces into political parties, with special emphasis on al-Jarīdah group.

During the early months of 1906, Turkish troops occupied Ṭaba, situated a few miles west of Aqaba. The British protested to the Porte and demanded the withdrawal of the troops claiming that they violated Egyptian territorial sovereignty. The Incident immediately became

an issue of political conflict between Cromer and his local allies on one side, and the Khedive and his supporters on the other. Kāmil, perhaps at the instigation of the Sultan, drew closer to the Khedive so that al-Mu'ayyad and al-Liwā joined hands in asserting the sovereign rights of the Sultan over Egypt. On the other hand, the followers of ᶜAbduh pledged their full support to the Consul-General and identified themselves openly with the British position. A serious crisis, however, was ultimately averted and, as a result of British diplomatic pressure, Taba was evacuated on 13 May 1906.

This Incident did not pass without some serious repercussions. Firstly, it prepared the ground for the re-establishment of the relations between the Khedive and Kāmil, which since 1904 had been severed. Secondly it brought to Cromer's notice the grave magnitude which the Panislamic movement might take on similar critical occasions. On the termination of the Incident he wrote to the Foreign Secretary:

> "an amount of Moslem feeling has been evoked such as I have never known before during my lengthy Egyptian experience. Although the intelligent classes have been on our side, and although probably very few Egyptians, if any, wanted the Turks

> back again in Egypt, at the same time, as regards the mass of the population, the feeling of the Moslem for his co-religionist swamped, ..." 65

Finally, the Incident impressed upon Cromer the invaluable support which his moderate allies would render him in his conflict with the Khedive.

No sooner had the agitation subsided than another event occurred which had a far-reaching impact on the political situation. On 13 June 1906 a group of British officers who were on a pigeon-shooting trip near Dinshwai in Menufia, accidentally shot and wounded an Egyptian woman. At the same time fire broke out in the threshing-floor of one of the villagers. A scuffle ensued between the officers and the villagers as a result of which a wounded British officer died while on his way to summon military help from a nearby camp. Later in the day British troops arrived on the scene and shot dead one of the villagers and arrested fifty-three suspects. A special court which specifically dealt with attacks against the army of occupation met two weeks later and passed sentences on the accused. The next day four Egyptians were executed while the rest received sentences ranging from imprisonment to public flogging.

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65. F.O. 800/46, Cromer to Grey, 16 May 1906.

The brutality and severity of the punishment provoked the feelings of all sections of the population, regardless of their political affiliations. At a later date Cromer described the sentences as being "somewhat unduly severe", while the new Consul-General in 1907 wrote that Dinshwai was "our most mismanaged piece of work since the beginning of the occupation".

Kāmil and the Khedive realised at this juncture the necessity of co-ordinating their anti-British campaign. Ṣādiq Ramaḍān, the private physician of the Khedive arranged a meeting between them which was attended (in addition to Ramaḍān) by Muḥammad Farīd and Laṭīf Salīm.[66] They agreed at that meeting to prepare for the formation of the Patriotic Party and for the establishment of a company to finance the publication of an English and French version of al-Liwā',[67] namely: the Standard and l'Etandard. The Khedive consequently urged some of his rich followers, like the Toussons and Yegens. to make financial contributions to the newly-formed company.[68] According to Cromer, the Khedive made a contribution of some L.E. 4000.[69]

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66. Farīd's Memoirs, Notebook no. 1, p. 1; A. Shafīq, Mudhakkarātī fī Nisf Qarn, Vol. II, Cairo, 1936, p. 103.

67. Ibid., Notebook No. 1, p. 2.

68. Ibid.

69. F.O. 371/68 Cromer to Grey, 16 November 1906.

ᶜAbduh's group, on the other hand, were caught unprepared by the consequences of the Dinshwai Incident. Cromer, at the time, was in England and the promptness with which the British authorities on the spot dealt with the situation left them little time to consider a plan of action. Some of their prominent members notably Fatḥī Zaghlūl and Ibrahīm al Hilbāwī were discredited for taking a direct part in the conviction of the accused, while Luṭfī al-Sayyid came into the limelight for defending in court the villagers implicated in the Incident. However, as ᶜAbduh's disciples realised the political capital which Kāmil and the Khedive were extracting from the event, they immediately set themselves to the task of countering the sudden rise in the popularity of the anti-British movement.

On 23 June 1906 a group of notables including several members of the General Assembly and Legislative Council met in Maḥmūd Suleimān's house in Cairo and decided to form a company for the publication of al-Jarīdah.[70] Convinced that the Dinshwai Incident was being adroitly exploited by the Khedive, they were resolved to combat the intrigues of the Palace and to

70. Al-Jarīdah, 13 June 1911.

express in the press their own views on political and social issues. The British Consul in Alexandria, commending the step, reported that a new departure in Egyptian journalism was being contemplated, that a company of sixty "gentlemen of high, social and official standing ..." was formed with a capital of L.E. 20,000 of which L.E. 16,000 were already paid. The policy of the newspaper, he added, would be governed by the following principles: the acceptance of the existing system of Government, the exclusion of issues which ferment religious prejudice and discussion, the creation of a healthy public opinion, and the encouragement of discussion on matters of public interest.[71] Cromer who was on leave in England at that time, submitted a memorandum to the Cabinet in which he made several proposals intended to reduce the growing influence of the Khedive and the Panislamic movement.[72] He informed the British Cabinet that, short of the only really effective remedy of naming him Viceroy of Egypt or President of the Council of Ministers, he proposed on his return to Cairo to bring about more cohesion and co-operation among the different parts of

71 F.O. 371/67 M.De C. Findley to Grey, 5 August 1906.

72. F.O. 371/68 Memorandum, 8 September 1906.

the Egyptian administration by bringing the various heads of Departments into contact with each other and with himself. He also expressed his intention to deprive the Khedive of his powers over the Waqfs' administration by placing it "under a responsible Minister, aided by a carefully selected Board composed, of course, almost entirely of Mohammedans". Finally he proposed to rally ᶜAbduh's group to his side in order to check the disrupting influence of Panislamism.

> "I have encouraged them [ᶜAbudh's group] by all possible means, short of granting pecuniary aid, to do so ... I am much inclined to take an early opportunity of bringing some more adherents of this school of Moslem thought into the Egyptian Cabinet, but I should like to wait a little before pronouncing a definite opinion on this point. This new departure would probably be unpopular amongst some of the British officials in Egypt, nevertheless, I am inclined to try the experiment."

On his return to Cairo, Cromer did not waste much time in pursuing his new policy. Within a few weeks on 26 October 1906, he had an audience with the Khedive and to the dismay of the latter,[73] he demanded the appointment of Saᶜd Zaghlūl as Minister of Public Instruction.[74] One of the first acts of the new

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73 A. Shafīq, vol. 2, p. 102.

74. F.O. 371/68, Cromer to Grey, 27 October 1906.

Minister was to establish the School of Qāḍīs, and to entrust its administration to his nephew, ᶜĀṭif Barakāt, a junior member of ᶜAbduh's group. This move undermined one of the chief functions of the Azhar and consequently curbed the Khedive's interference in the administration of the Sharīᶜa Courts. Subsequently, in March 1907, the Egyptian Government formed a committee, which included among its members Fatḥī Zaghlūl, to report on the budget of the Sharīᶜa Courts and to review the system of salaries and expenditures.[75] Towards the end of 1906 the Khedive, without consulting the Consul-General, had appointed a new Rector for the Azhar. Cromer took the opportunity to express his strong objection to this step and was able to extract from the Khedive a promise to remove the new Rector within three months.[76] Cromer also moved to prevent the Khedive from manipulating for his own interest the distribution of honours and decorations to Government officials.[77]

On the 9th March 1907, the first issue of al-Jarīdah

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75. Ibid., 10 March 1907.

76. F.O. 800/46 Cromer to Grey, 2 November 1906.

77. F.O. 371/244 Cromer to Grey, 29 December 1906.

finally appeared, and a month later a Ministerial decree awarded some of the shareholders of al-Jarīdah company official honours and decorations. In an interview with the Egyptian Gazette Luṭfī al-Sayyid revealed that before its publication, some of the prominent members of the Company, namely, Maḥmūd Sulaimān, Ḥassan ᶜAbdel Rāziq, Ibrāhīm Saᶜīd and Maḥmūd ᶜAbdel Ghaffār communicated to the Prime Minister their intentions. They then, at the invitation of Cromer, were received at the Agency where the Consul-General expressed to them his warm sympathies for the project.[78]

By the beginning of 1907, therefore, the Consul-General had achieved a certain measure of success in checking the anti-British feeling which the Taba and Dinshwai Incidents had provoked. He was confident that he could cope with his local difficulties, but recognised that his real troubles entirely arose from the sympathetic response which the Egyptian Patriotic Party were receiving in England.[79]

As early as 1904, the Khedive had established contact with Robertson, a Liberal M.P. who formed a committee for the defence of Egyptian demands for self-

78. Al-Jarīdah, 19 September 1911.

79. F.O. 800/46, Cromer to Grey, 3 March 1907.

government.[80] Early in 1906, the Liberals won an overwhelming majority in the general elections, and with them in power the Egyptian question was given more attention in Parliamentary debates, the more so after the Taba and Dinshwai Incidents. Embarrassing questions in connection with Dinshwai were asked in the Commons, and demands for the early release of the prisoners involved in the Incident were made. Cromer complained that,

> "If I am only left alone, I can deal with the local situation, although it is rather a ticklish business. But if the agitators here are to get into their heads that by continual worrying and misrepresenting things to members of Parliament at home they can have their own way, the whole machine of Government here will really become almost unworkable. I do most earnestly urge that when a good opportunity occurs, a very firm stand should be made against them. ... So long as Mr Robertson and his friends merely ask questions about drink, Nile mud, etc., they will do no real harm ... But if they raise the whole Denshwai case again, and insist upon the immediate pardon of the prisoners, the case will be much more serious." 81.

Soon other points were raised against Cromer's policy in Egypt. The Parliamentary Egyptian Committee

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80. Abbas's Memoirs, al-Misrī, 9 July 1951.

81. F.O. 800/46, Cromer to Grey, 22 November 1906.

accused Cromer of attempting to displace Arabic by English as the language of instruction in Egyptian schools. Simultaneously the same accusation was made by the editor of al-Mu'ayyad during the debates of the Egyptian General Assembly. Furthermore, the Foreign Secretary, pressed by Robertson and his colleagues, asked Cromer whether it was possible to remit the Dinshwai sentences.[82] Cromer explained that Arabic was a poor language for teaching sciences,[83] and whilst appreciating the difficulties of the Foreign Secretary, he deprecated a change for the time being in the Dinshwai sentences.[84]

For some time now, Cromer's health deteriorated under the strain of work. He stated in the course of proposing his resignation that his health really began to give way in 1898 and had never been the same since then. He confessed that it was becoming more and more difficult for him to cope with the situation in Egypt and the Sudan in spite of his attempts to decentralise.[85] Gorst reported that according to the doctors, "there was

82. F.O. 800/46, Grey to Cromer, 2 March 1907.

83. Ibid., Cromer to Grey, 3 March 1907.

84. Ibid., Cromer to Grey, 7 March 1907.

85. Ibid., Cromer to Grey, 28 March 1907.

nothing organically wrong with him, but his nervous system has had too much strain and has reacted upon his digestion".[86] It is probable that his great irritation at the growing criticism of his policy in the Commons, and the increasing difficulty of managing the local situation produced a serious mental and physical strain which finally led him to submit his resignation.

Despite the fact that in October 1906, the Khedive and Kāmil had decided to form a political party, the project did not materialise. The Khedive from the beginning seemed to be reluctant to associate himself openly with Kāmil.[87] He was aware of Kāmil's political independence and would have had a good reason to suspect that once the party was formed, the growing popularity which the latter won after Dinshwai, especially among the students, would enable him to assume almost full control over its policies. ʿAlī Yūsuf, out of hostility towards Kāmil attempted to undermine the project. Furthermore, Cromer's fresh offensive against the Khedive, appeared to dishearten the latter and led him to approach the Consul-General "in a roundabout way"

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86. Ibid., Gorst to Grey, 20 April 1907.

87. The Khedive suggested in his first meeting with Kāmil in 1906 to form a secret party. Farid's Memoirs, notebook no. 1, p. 1.

disclaiming his demand for an Egyptian Parliament.[88] But what ultimately determined the Khedive's attitude towards Kāmil and the idea of forming a political party was the new policy introduced by Cromer's successor.

On the recommendation of Cromer, Gorst was appointed to the post of British Consul-General in Egypt. He arrived in Cairo on 16 April 1907, and met the Khedive three days later. He described the meeting as "cordial", but hastened to add that before conveying his final impression to the Foreign Secretary he intended to "keep a careful watch for the next months or so".[89]

No sooner had Cromer left early in May 1907, than al-Jarīdah suggested in its editorial on May 18, that neither a policy of co-operation nor of hostility between the Khedive and the British would contribute to the achievement of real independent life for the nation.[90] In the same article, al-Jarīdah impressed upon its readers the necessity of the formation of a political party to represent national public opinion. The

88. F.O. 800/46, Cromer to Grey, 30 March 1907.

89. Ibid., Gorst to Grey, 20 April 1907.

90. Al-Jarīdah, 18 May 1907.

reference to co-operation between the two authorities in the country indicated the beginning of a change of policy introduced by Gorst. However, during the summer of 1907 the new Consul-General went on leave to England and the Khedive went to Constantinople, but shortly after their return, it became evident that the two men had made their peace. Gorst felt that Cromer's hand towards the end of his term of office had weakened, and, therefore, he began to rely more and more on the British Advisers. Gorst also noticed that the growth of the nationalist spirit caused Cromer to antagonise the Egyptian Muslims and forced him to seek the support of the European communities and native Christians. The situation had been rendered more acute by his hostility towards the Khedive, and by the greatly strenghened influence of the nationalists over a considerable section of the educated Egyptian Muslims. On the basis of this assessment of the situation, Gorst proposed to maintain friendly relations with the Khedive, solve the financial crisis, refrain from indulging in polemical issues which would lead to embarrassing questions in the Commons, show greater sympathy towards the Muslims and the official class, and, last but not least, restore Cromer's earlier hostile policy towards European

privileges.[91]

In drawing up his policy, Gorst appeared to be greatly influenced by local conditions rather than by wider British considerations, except that of avoiding the discussion of the Egyptian question in the Commons. Neither his private exchanges with the Foreign Secretary nor his correspondence with the Foreign Office showed at any point that the British Government attempted to force his hand or dictate his policies. Similar to Cromer, Gorst was left a free hand to manage Egyptian affairs. His understanding of the situation, however, suffered from some major weaknesses. Neither economically nor politically did he have the insight or foresight of his predecessor. His vision on his arrival in Egypt was definitely blurred by the existing turmoil of events. He wrote that at the time of the announcement of Cromer's resignation the excitement among the Nationalists was boiling. He recorded

> "The hostility between H.H. /Khedive Abbas/ and the "Lord" had grown to such a pitch that the condition of "armed neutrality" which existed between them could not have lasted much longer. Lastly the local situation was complicated by the outlook of a severe financial crisis coming at the end of two or three years of great speculative activity." 92

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91 Gorst's Papers, Autobiographical Note, pp. 111-121.

92. Ibid., p. 115.

His pragmatic approach in dealing with the situation set him on a course of action which did not distinguish between the transitional and the permanent symptoms of the situation, between the natural ally of Britain and its temporary friend. In slightly less than a year, his policy alienated almost all the high-ranking British officials in the Egyptian Administration. The Oriental Secretary at the Agency wrote privately to his mother:

> "Did I tell you old Mitchell /Adviser of Interior/ vanished at last on Monday last? I am sorry to lose the old dear, but there was no help for it. I rather think next June will see the end of Corbett /Procureur General/ also, so you see the indomitable sportsman /Gorst/ is bringing down the old birds right and left." 93

By that time, April 1908, the Financial Adviser had already resigned and Boyle himself was to leave Egypt at the end of the year.

On the other hand, the early effects of the economic depression were beginning to be felt towards the end of February 1907. Both Egyptian landowners and foreign residents urged the Government to take effective measures to check the decline in the financial situation. Gorst, despite the recommendation of his Financial Advisers refused to move on the matter, and the negative effects

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93. Boyle's Papers, Box E, H. Boyle to Mother, 12 April 1908.

of the crisis remained with Egypt until the outbreak of the First World War. In reviewing the situation in 1908, Gorst recognised that his local policy did not appeal to the Egyptians or the Europeans, but he was determined to adhere to it in spite of provocations from "all sides".[94] Boyle again amusingly commented:

> "The other day he [Gorst] asked me: 'Frankly, do you think there is any section, or sub-section of society here, British, foreign, or Egyptian, which has a good word for me and my policy?' and I frankly answered 'Not one', at which he grinned cheerfully ..."[95]

The final rapprochement between the Khedive and Gorst towards the end of 1907, put paid to the earlier plan of Kāmil and the Khedive to form a political party. The scheme, however, had been revived in mid-May 1907 by the members of al-Jarīdah company. The departure of Cromer was in effect a serious setback to the interests and aspirations of al-Jarīdah group, for he had already gone half way in appointing members of this group to a number of higher posts in the Egyptian Administration. In his annual report for 1906, Cromer recommended the extension of the powers of the Provincial Councils and

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94. Gorst's Papers, Autobiographical Note, p. 124-125.

95. Boyle's Papers, op.cit.

the increase of their membership to include a larger number of provincial notables.[96] With the appointment of Gorst, however, the scheme was delayed for two years before it was put into effect. At the same time, the departure of Cromer aroused a feeling of insecurity among the official class and created some apprehension among the leading members of ᶜAbduh's group. The Prime Minister, on receiving the news of Cromer's resignation, himself decided to leave office, while the Zaghlūl brothers, Qāsim Amīn, ᶜĀtif Barakāt and others who met at Saᶜd's house on the night of 12 April were very depressed.[97]

In the first instance the reaction of al-Jarīdah to the economic depression was one of studied moderation. While attributing the cause of the crisis to the indulgence in land speculation by a number of companies, and while admitting the rise in the cost of living, it counselled the acceptance of the existing situation.[98] And though recognising the failure of the measures taken in June 1906 by the Government to control the formation of new companies, al-Jarīdah

96. Egypt no. 1 (1907) Cd. 3394.

97. Zaghlūl's Memoirs, notebook no. 6, 12 April 1907.

98. Al-Jarīdah, 10 March 1907.

referred in complimentary terms to Cromer's warning at the end of the year of the dangers of the increasing activities in land speculation.[99] On 26 March 1907, al-Jarīdah called upon the Egyptian Government to intervene and put a stop to the mismanagement and irregularities exercised by financial and mortgage companies.[100] Two weeks later al-Jarīdah supported the proposal of Amīn Shamsī, a member of al-Jarīdah Company, made in the General Assembly on March 2nd to set up a Ministry of Agriculture.[101] However, with the announcement of Cromer's resignation, the newspaper, apart from advocating Government intervention in the crisis, tended to evoke the national and personal sentiments of the rich Egyptians to establish a national bank or at least to take part in foreign enterprises.[102] A similar call was also made upon them to invest their money in light industries and to abandon their over-cautious attitude towards trade for a more enterprising spirit.

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99. Al-Jarīdah, 21 March 1907, and Egypt no. 1 (1907) Cd. 3394.

100. Al-Jarīdah, 26 March 1907.

101. Ibid., 10 April 1907.

102. Ibid., 24 April 1907.

The emphasis of al-Jarīdah, in relation to the economic crisis, seemed, at the time of the departure of Cromer, to shift from a complete confidence in the ability of the Government and Cromer to solve the problem, to an increasing tendency of reliance on Government intervention. Clearly, this reflected not only the feeling of anxiety which increased as the crisis unfolded, but also, basically, the reaction was dictated by a conscious impulse for the preservation and promotion of self-interest.

The reaction of al-Jarīdah group to the economic crisis was not the only indication of the growing concern of the large landowners over their fortunes. They simultaneously reacted in the direction of political self-assertion. During the first month of the publication of al-Jarīdah the demand for the extension of the functions of the existing representative institutions did not exceed that which was already embodied in Cromer's report for 1906. Even the criticisms of al-Jarīdah of the actual workings of these institutions during the twenty-four years of their existence did not materially differ from Cromer's own views. Al-Jarīdah, clearly opposed to a radical change in the political and economic system of the country,

advocated the gradual attainment of political independence, an aspiration which Cromer publicly supported, but the feasibility of which he privately doubted. Therefore, when the Egyptian Government rejected the resolution passed by the General Assembly for the establishment of a parliament, and promised only to extend the powers of the Provincial Councils, al-Jarīdah, disregarding its earlier demands which included the Legislative Council and the General Assembly, praised the Government for its decision. Al-Jarīdah stated that this was a step towards the participation of the nation with its Government in legislating for the people and invited every citizen to "leave the spirit of obstinacy and respect the rulers as long as they performed their functions".[103] Evaluating the work of Cromer in Egypt, al-Jarīdah recognised his great contribution to the economy of the country and paid tribute to his efforts for the protection of the press and personal freedom.[104] But as soon as Cromer had left Egypt, al-Jarīdah reverted to its earlier demands for the extension of the powers of the Provincial Councils, Legislative Council and General Assembly,[105]

103. Ibid., 1 April 1907.

104 Ibid., 13 April 1907.

105. Ibid., 20 and 21 May 1907.

and also demanded the revival of the functions of the State Advisory Council to co-ordinate the process of legislation among different Government Departments.[106] Almost all the members of the representative institutions were drawn from the provincial class of notables. According to Cromer, the candidates to these institutions were either cumdas or those who aspired to be cumdas. They were always landed proprietors representing the interests of a single class.[107] In strongly emphasising the necessity of granting these institutions wider legislative powers, al-Jarīdah was in fact seeking to ensure, especially after Cromer's departure, the enhancement of the political influence of the large landowners.

Considering the anxieties and motivations of al-Jarīdah group, on 18 May 1907, the editorial of the newspaper asserted that while recognising the presence in Egypt of an enlightened class of notables, Government officials, and members of the liberal professions who were all interested in asserting the nation's independence, they did not yet form a political party.[108] On 21 September 1907, al-Jarīdah group held a meeting

106. Ibid., 19 May 1907.

107. Egypt no. 1 (1907), Cd. 3394.

108. Al-Jarīdah, 18 May 1907.

and declared the formation of the 'Ummah Party. Reporting the event, the Adviser for the Interior wrote that the Party was composed wholly of members of the Legislative Council, General Assembly, some leading ʿulamāʾ, and large provincial landowners. He added that, since the announcement of its moderate programme the 'Ummah Party "has received the adhesion of numerous groups, mainly belonging to the landed and legal classes, both from the capital and the provinces".[109]

Once al-Jarīdah set the pace, the other political movements followed its example. The Khedive, after his return from Constantinople, had already urged his followers to abstain from taking part in nationalist agitation,[110] while al-Muʾayyad lost no time in attacking the 'Ummah Party on the first day of its inception.[111] Upon arrival from Europe in October 1907, Muṣṭafā Kāmil realised the possibility of his political isolation and set to work to form the Patriotic Party. On the 27 December the National Council and the Administrative Committee of the Patriotic Party were organised. In the meantime, ʿAlī Yūsuf had already

109. F.O. 371/249, R. Graham to Grey, 4 October 1907.

110. F.O. 800/46, Gorst to Grey, 13 October 1907.

111. Al-Muʾayyad, 22 September 1907.

published the political platform of the Constitutional Reform Party in al-Mu'ayyad on 9 December. While the programme of the Patriotic Party demanded the complete independence of Egypt and the Sudan, al-Mu'ayyad advocated administrative independence to increase the powers of the Khedive. While al-Liwā expressed the idealistic sentiment of the youth and the urban-centred section of the intelligentsia, al-Mu'ayyad reflected the change of heart of the Khedive towards the occupation and asserted the political rights of the sovereign.

The emergence of Egyptian political parties during the second half of 1907 was a significant stage in the evolution of political consciousness among the different sections of the political movement in Egypt. Though these sections, namely: the Panislamists, ᶜAbduh's and Kāmil's followers had existed long before 1907, they owed their transformation into political parties to the immediate changes in the economic and political situation which developed during 1906-1907.

Under the Consul-Generalship of Gorst, the Khedive proceeded to consolidate his position, and to regain some of the powers which he and his father had lost to the British occupation. Early in 1908, the Prime Minister admitted to his son-in-law that due to the

interference of the sovereign, his position had become quite untenable, and that he had therefore informed Gorst of his desire to resign.[112] Sa'd Zaghlūl, on the other hand, in the hope of retaining his ministerial post, expressed on several occasions his allegiance to the Khedive and categorically denied any connection with the 'Ummah Party.[113] He even severed his relations with some of the members of the Party and suggested to Luṭfī al-Sayyid that they ought not to visit each other so often.[114] In November 1908, Muṣṭafā Fahmī resigned and Gorst, as a result of his consultations with the Khedive, agreed to the appointment of Buṭros Ghālī, a prominent Copt, as Prime Minister. The Khedive's view in the matter was decisive, because when Gorst expressed his apprehension about the appointment of a Christian, the Khedive denied that it would arouse Muslim ill-feeling.[115] Similarly, after Ghālī's assassination in 1910, Gorst accepted the Khedive's

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112. Zaghlūl's Memoirs, Notebook no. 10, 8 January 1908.

113. Zaghlūl's memoirs during 1907-11 revealed persistent attempts on his part and that of other Ministers to gain the Khedive's favour in order to maintain their positions.

114. Zaghlūl's Memoirs, Notebook no. 14, November 1909.

115. F.O. 371/452, Gorst to Grey, 10 November 1908.

proposal to appoint Muḥammad Saʿīd to the Premiership.[116] Furthermore, the withdrawal of British Inspectors from the provinces enabled the Khedive to exercise more influence over the appointment of mudīrs and the provincial administration. Zaghlūl, while still a Minister in the Egyptian Government, noted that to a large extent the Khedive, through the members of his household and entourage, manipulated the 1907-08 elections for the General Assembly and Legislative Council.[117] In addition, the Khedive moved to assert his predominant position in the Azhar. He forced Sheikh Ḥassūnah al-Nawāwī, a disciple of ʿAbduh and Rector of the Azhar, to resign his post early in 1909. At the same time the scheme initiated under Cromer for the reform of the Sharīʿa Courts was shelved.

The Khedive's efforts were also directed against his previous allies, the Patriotic Party, and his old enemies, members of the 'Ummah Party. He succeeded in creating some difficulties for the Jarīdah Company when in 1909, he indirectly caused some twenty-five of its members to demand its liquidation, but the remaining majority of the members of the Company continued their

116. F.O. 371/891, Gorst to Grey, 21 February 1910.

117. Zaghlūl's Memoirs, Notebook no. 12, February 1908.

support for al-Sayyid. Similarly he intimidated a number of its followers in Government service, either by means of indirect pressure or by simple administrative measures. Those who acquiesced to his wishes, such as the Zaghlūl brothers, managed to survive in office, but those who could not adapt themselves to the new situation either resigned[118] or were subjected to disagreeable administrative measures.[119] However, by virtue of its entrenched social influence in the countryside, and its political predominance in the national and local representative institutions, the 'Ummah Party managed to withstand the bitter hostility of the Khedive. On the other hand, the position of the Patriotic Party was greatly undermined by the repressive measures introduced during 1908-1911. In addition to the loss of its leader in 1908 and the disenchantment of the Coptic elements with the increasingly anti-Christian policy of ʿAbdel ʿAzīz Shāwīsh, the party faced the joint determination of the Khedive and Gorst to liquidate it.

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118. At the instigation of the Khedive, Mustafā ʿAbdel Rāziq, the son of Hassan ʿAbdel Rāziq, Deputy-Chairman of the 'Ummah Party, was forced to resign from the School of Qādis. Zaghlūl's memoirs, notebook no. 14, 15 March 1909.

119. Muhammad Mahmūd, the son of the leader of the 'Ummah Party, Cromer's protege, was constantly inconvenienced by a frequent change of his post from one province to the other.

Gorst suggested that the only remedy to check nationalist propaganda was to establish Government control over the vernacular press. He informed the Foreign Secretary,

> "I believe that all classes in this country, from the Khedive downwards, would welcome the adoption of measures for controlling the press, ... The difficulties which I see in the way are, of course, Parliamentary, and you know better than I do whether, if we can make out a sufficiently strong case, they can be removed. An effective press law already exists, having been passed in 1881. The question of its application to Europeans presents difficulties." 120

The Khedive was certainly behind Gorst's move. In 1909, the British Government secured the agreement of some European Powers to the revival of the law, but in view of the widespread opposition which it provoked locally, the Egyptian Cabinet rejected the scheme. The Khedive immediately approached his Ministers and demanded its acceptance. He sent a member of his household, 'Aḥmad Shafīq, to inform Muḥammad Sa'īd and Sa'd Zaghlūl that as he was the one who initiated the project, he did not expect his Ministers to put him in an embarrassing situation vis-a-vis Gorst and the British Government. The Ministershad no alternative but to

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120. F.O. 800/47, Gorst to Grey, 28 March 1908.

endorse the Khedive's desire, and the law was reactivated.[121] It was the abuse of this law which enabled the British occupation and the Khedive to exercise a greater measure of control over the press in Egypt. It was applied more often to the disadvantage of the Patriotic press, and provided the legal pretext for the harassment of the leaders of the Patriotic Party. Furthermore a decree, passed in 1909, placed criminals under police supervision. The Foreign Secretary noted that it opened the door for "favouritism" or "private malice".[122] Despite the assurances of the Consul-General to the contrary,[123] there was no indication that the new decree would not be used for political intimidation.

Pressure was also exercised on students to limit their involvement in political agitation, and Zaghlūl, in his effort to please the sovereign, carried out the task faithfully. The Patriotic Party, under the progressive measures of the authorities, gradually lost

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121. Zaghlūl's Memoirs, Notebook no. 14, 26 March 1909. According to Shafīq, the Khedive informed him that Zaghlūl was very unhappy at the decision to revive the press law. Shafīq, vol. 2, p. 167.

122. F.O. 800/47, Grey to Gorst, 13 August 1909.

123. Ibid., Gorst to Grey, 19 August, 1909.

much of the support which it previously enjoyed in the towns and among the students. Its inability to represent the interests of a particular social class, and its failure to maintain a permanent alliance with the Khedive, left it in a very precarious position and finally led to its decline.

By 1911, the Khedive had regained a great deal of influence over the appointment of his Ministers and the administration of Government Departments, consolidated his position in the religious institutions, and managed to weaken the popular and official support of his adversaries. Gorst on the other hand, while succeeding in his policy of damping down nationalist agitation, was at the same time unable to repair the economic condition. The crisis checked the growth of items of revenue, such as import duties and fees on transfer of land, which together represented some L.E. 2,500,000. Revenues from the badaliyyah (exemption from military service) and proceeds of the sale of Government lands disappeared from the 1908 budget.[124] Gorst's opening note on the financial situation for 1908, was couched in pessimistic terms, he wrote:

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124. F.O. 371/448, Note on the budget of Egypt for 1908, December 1907.

> "The recovery from the effects of the financial crisis of 1907 has been much slower than was anticipated and the stagnation of business in the chief centres of activity still continues."[125]

In 1909, the cotton crop was lower than expected due to the spread of the cotton-worm. At its seventh Congress at Brussels in 1910, the International Federation of Master Cotton Spinners' and Manufacturers' Association adopted a resolution urging the Egyptian Government to form a well-equipped Agricultural Department to check the decline in quality and production of Egyptian cotton. Gorst later pointed out that the Egyptian Government was taking steps to implement a scheme for the institution of an Agricultural Department.[126] Finally, in November 1910, such a Department was organised under the direction of a British official. During the years 1907-1911, the rate of increase of capital invested in joint-stock companies compared to the rate of increase before the crisis showed a sharp decline. During the same period, mortgage companies showed slow signs of recovery, but by no means did this rise to the pre-crisis level of financial activity.

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125. Egypt no. 1 (1909), Cd. 4580.

126. F.O. 368/400, Gorst to Chairman of I.F.M.C.S.M.A., 24 June 1910.

The total effects of the crisis and its aftermath greatly harmed the economic interests of the cotton growers as well as the European financiers. The Consul-General, in an effort to prevent further abuse of the company law in Egypt supported the unpopular decision of the Mixed Courts of Appeal in 1908 which declared the Company City and Agricultural Land of Egypt (Limited), null and void, chiefly on the ground that it was Egyptian in nature but not registered in Egypt. Consequently many companies registered themselves as Egyptian, but those which were unable to do so went into liquidation. Between 1907 and 1911 some 46 companies, with a total paid up capital of £E.8,222,000, went out of business.[127] When the British Chamber of Commerce and the British Consular Court contested in 1911, a similar decision by the Mixed Courts, the matter was referred to the Foreign Office and Board of Trade, but ultimately the views of the Consul-General prevailed.[128] The British business community was further disturbed when the Egyptian Government gave the contract for the construction of the Boulaq Bridge to a French firm. At the same time the Government refused

127. Owen, Cotton ..., p. 284.

128. F.O. 368/526, Cheetham to Grey, 26 August 1911; and F.O. 141/447/file 14594.

to respond to the proposal made by the business community to put forward £E. 2 million at the disposal of some of the financial houses to relieve the tightness of the money market.[129]

The Egyptian landowners likewise suffered from the effects of the crisis. Mortgage banks often resorted to foreclosures as the proprietors failed to meet their debt payments. Those who managed to acquire fresh loans to pay the old ones did so at the risk of further undermining whatever collateral security they still retained, and at best increased in the long run their indebtedness. Muḥammad ʿAlī ʿAllūba recalled that his father, a notable of Assiut, could not meet his financial burdens after the crisis and soon in May 1907 died.[130] The consequences of the crisis spread to all classes of landowners. The small peasants became more than ever the victims of the moneylender. Gorst in 1910, reported:

> "As a result of the crisis of 1907, there has no doubt been a recrudescence of usury. It is very difficult to see how this can be prevented, ... We have set our faces during the last few years against any increase in the output of

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129. F.O. 800/47, Gorst to Grey, 28 March 1908.

130. M.A. ʿAllūba, Dhikrayāt Siyāsiya wa Ijtimāʿiya, unpublished, p. 24.

> the Agricultural Bank. The suggestion of State ownership with tenant cultivators would be counter to the strong desire of the people to own land, and the Mohammedan custom of sub-division of property ... The only sound remedy for the present state of things is that the fellah should learn not to borrow beyond his means, and I gather that painful experience is teaching him this lesson." 131

However, despite Gorst's wishful reflections, and the lack of capital in the hands of the Egyptian proprietors, the process of accumulation of debt was inevitable. By 1914 the total mortgage debts amounted to £E. 66 million,[132] while the debt of those who owned 5 feddans or less amounted to almost £E. 16 million in 1912.[133]

Despite some of the economically sound measures Gorst took, he seemed to alienate the European residents and the native cotton growers. His decision to co-operate with the Khedive was taken purely on political grounds. His aim was first and foremost to eradicate the influence of Kāmil and his Party. In doing so, however, he lost the confidence of the provincial notables. On the other hand, pressed by financial

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131. F.O. 371/891, Gorst to Grey, 24 March 1910.

132. Crouchley, Investment of Foreign Capital ..., p. 74.

133 Egypt no. 1 (1914), Cd. 7358.

considerations, he failed to respond to the demands of the European business community. The Government was unable during the years 1907-1911 to perform to any appreciable extent its crucial task of accelerating the process of agricultural growth. The near depletion of Government revenues greatly hindered the utilisation of funds for public works and irrigation schemes. Gorst was very much aware of his unpopularity among foreigners and Egyptians. He made a determined effort in 1909 to win their good-will, but was unsuccessful. Early in 1908, the Dinshwai prisoners were released, and during 1909 he made an attempt to win Egyptian sympathy for his policy. He wrote:

> "Throughout the year the policy of endeavouring to win over to our side the more reasonable element amongst the Egyptians was pursued, by allowing the ministers more initiative and responsibility, allowing the Legislative Council to use the consultative powers which they possessed, and giving the Provincial Councils some real powers over local Government."

He admitted, however, that the results he hoped from these steps were neutralised by the hostility of the nationalist press, and the opposition to his policies from the Anglo-Egyptian officials and local European residents.[134] Already, in April 1908 al-Jarīdah had

134. Gorst's Papers, Autobiographical Note, p.132.

described the Government scheme for the extension of the functions of the Provincial Councils as insignificant and inadequate.[135] A few months later, influenced by the political changes in Turkey, Luṭfī al-Sayyid urged the Egyptian Government to grant the nation a constitution. After two years of delay, Gorst caused the amendment of the Organic Law to allow for the extension of the powers of the Provincial Councils in partial response to the mounting demand for a constitution.[136] The new law received the approval of the Legislative Council and came into effect on 1st January 1910. The Acting Consul-General remarked:

> "The fact that it has received the approval of the Legislative Council justifies the hope that the large landowners and notables in the provinces will cooperate with the Government in making these bodies a useful and successful part of the machinery of the Government." 137

But the timing of the introduction of the law and the keen interest in securing the sympathies of the large landowners and notables coincided with an attempt made to extend the Suez Canal Concession. Both the Khedive

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135. Al-Jarīdah, 8 April 1908.

136. Abbas' Memoirs, al-Misri, 28 June 1951.

137. F.O. 371/662, R. Graham to Grey, 19 September 1909.

and Gorst were interested in the realisation of the project. The Khedive, according to Yūsuf Ṣaddīq, a prominent member of his household, expected to receive a commission from a French financier for promoting the project.[138] The Financial Adviser and Gorst, unable to waive the Sultan's restrictions upon Egypt's borrowing powers,[139] calculated that the money accruing to Egypt from the scheme would enable them to solve some of Egypt's economic difficulties and finance railway projects in the Sudan.

It would seem that the introduction of the new provincial law was a step in response to a widely popular demand, in the hope of winning the good-will of the Egyptians for a very unpopular financial scheme. Al-Jarīdah and Al-ᶜAlam condemned in the strongest terms the project, while a number of Ministers opposed it, but under pressure from the Khedive and Gorst they ultimately proposed to refer it to the General Assembly for a final decision.[140] At this point Gorst's political judgement

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138. Farīd's Memoirs, Notebook no. 6, pp. 165-167. Gorst noted that the scheme was cordially approved by the Khedive and Butors Ghālī, Gorst's Papers, Autobiographical Note, p. 133. Zaghlūl pointed out that the Khedive strongly urged him more than once to defend the project in the General Assembly, Zaghlūl's Memoirs, Notebook no. 18, 13-20 February, 1910.

139. F.O. 371/664, Marling to Grey, 9 November 1909.

140. Zaghlūl's Memoirs, Notebook No. 17,31 October 1909.

again failed him. He accepted the Ministers' suggestion in the hope that by making such a concession to the General Assembly he would procure the agreement of its members to his scheme. But soon he realised his mistake, he wrote:

> "No doubt I committed some blunders in my management of what was a very difficult (perhaps impossible) business, and perhaps the decision to submit the scheme to the General Assembly was one of the chief mistakes, but it is easy to be wise after the event." 141

Apart from Egyptian opposition to the scheme, the National Bank of Egypt, a British controlled undertaking, also opposed the project. Its Governor felt that the financial reliance of the Egyptian Government on the Suez Canal Company would necessarily undermine the lucrative business of the Bank in Egypt.[142]

The assassination of the Prime Minister early in 1910, effectively buried all the hopes of the Consul-General to win over to his side the members of the Assembly.[143] From that time on, he intensified his campaign against the nationalist press and the Patriotic Party, and ultimately his disappointment with his earlier

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141. Gorst's Papers, Autobiographical Note, p. 133.

142. Zaghlūl's Memoirs, Notebook no. 13, 24 November 1909.

143 F.O. 800/47, Gorst to Grey, 26 February 1910.

policy led him to report that he was "gradually coming to the conclusion that it has been a failure, ...". To remedy the situation he proposed that, "the English should come out more into the open, and, though I see the objections to this course, it appears to me to be the lesser of two evils",[144] In the same strain, the Foreign Secretary stated that the manner in which the Assembly rejected any discussion of the Suez project made him concur with Gorst's view, "I too have been coming to the conclusion that we shall have to do something to assert authority in Egypt."[145] In May 1910, Gorst submitted to the British Cabinet a Memorandum on the situation in Egypt which categorically emphasised that the Egyptians were very far from the stage when they could govern themselves without British assistance, and that he therefore proposed to terminate the gradual extension of the powers of existing representative institutions.[146] This became official policy when Grey announced it in the Commons.

Unable to solve the financial difficulties which Egypt experienced after the crisis, and eager to check

144. Ibid., Gorst to Grey, 10 April 1910.

145. Ibid., Grey to Gorst, 24 April 1910.

146. F.O. 371/890, Gorst's Memorandum on the Situation in Egypt, 22 May 1910.

the appeal of the Patriotic Party, the new Consul-General allied himself with the Khedive. When the dominant aspect of his policy was to eradicate the influence of the Patriotic Party, he resorted to the adoption of repressive measures towards the press, the leaders of the Party, and the students. But when the urgent necessity to remedy the economic situation became paramount, Gorst tended to concede to the provincial notables a wider influence in the Provincial Councils and the Assembly, in the hope of winning in return their acquiescence for the extension of the Suez concession. But when this policy proved to be a complete failure, he reverted to his earlier policy of repression.

As the mouthpiece of the 'Ummah Party, al-Jarīdah defended the political and economic interests of the class of provincial notables. It defined their status in society, voiced their demands, and articulated their aspirations. In the process, al-Jarīdah further elaborated the earlier tendencies which it inherited from ᶜAbduh, Fathī Zaghlūl, Amīn and ᶜUmar. The shift from the individual to the wealthy family as the unit of national regeneration became the basis for the definition

of the Egyptian nation and the 'Ummah Party. Similarly, the secular notion of solidarity continued to be applied to social relationships as opposed to the increasing religious fanaticism of ᶜAbdel ᶜAzīz Shāwīsh. Furthermore, though the attitude towards the occupation suffered a radical change in certain respects, there was yet no demand for complete independence or evacuation.

Al-Jarīdah claimed that the 'Ummah Party represented the interests of the whole nation. The Egyptian nation, however, al-Sayyid was inclined to believe was not composed of individuals but of families. The general solidarity of the nation and its collective authority was based on the solidarity of these prominent and leading Egyptian families.[147] In an interview with the Egyptian Gazette, al-Sayyid revealed that, it was not the intention of the 'Ummah Party to popularise its principles among the masses of commoners (al-ᶜĀmah), though he believed that every Egyptian ought to adopt these principles.[148] Accused by al-Mu'ayyad and al-ᶜAlam of being the representative of the 'Aᶜyan (notables) and not the 'Ummah (nation), al-Jarīdah retorted by boldly admitting the charge as the following

147. Al-Jarīdah, 14 November 1910.
148. Ibid., 19 September 1911.

extract shows:

> "When al-Jarīdah described its founding members as al-'Aᶜyan, it was only stating a fact, similar to saying large farmers.
>
> The British authorities have always accused the nationalist movement of being the creation of a few educated Egyptians. Consequently al-'Aᶜyān, or large farmers, or the heads of the provincial families or a great number of them - whom the British considered to be the real men of responsibility in Egypt - decided to take part in the political affairs of the country." 149

On the occasion of the formation of the 'Ummah Party, the Deputy Chairman had pointed out that since the first meeting of al-Jarīdah group a political party was virtually formed. He said:

> "All members of the company had similar objectives and were united by their social positions and the common bond of blood and nationality ... The choice to adopt the term al-'Ummah Party coincided with the fact that the Party included among its members the majority of the heads of prominent families, who represented the interests of the whole nation, a claim which no other party in Egypt could make." 150

The tendency to assign explicitly to the 'Aᶜyān, or provincial notables, the leading role in the regeneration of the Egyptian society and to reduce and often even substitute its interests and aspirations for those of the class of large landowners clearly indicated the particular social outlook of al-Jarīdah. A further

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149. Ibid., 15 March 1909. 150. Ibid., 21 September 1907.

affirmation of this conclusion was inherent in the policy of the 'Ummah Party. The departure of Cromer, as was already mentioned, hardened the demand of the Party for the extension of the functions of the national and provincial representative institutions. This movement gained impetus in 1908, when for the first time Luṭfī al-Sayyid, influenced by the political changes in Turkey, urged the Egyptian Government to grant the nation a constitution.[151] Consequently, early in October, two leading members of the Party prepared a draft constitution and submitted it to the Legislative Council.[152] However, the constitutional movement represented by the 'Ummah Party did not go beyond the demand for the Egyptians to legislate for themselves. At no stage of its development did this movement raise the question of complete independence or evacuation. These were the limits beyond which the Party was not prepared to go.

Despite the radical shift in the system of political alliances in favour of the Khedive, the 'Ummah Party remained basically faithful to the principle of preserving a division of labour between the native and

151. Ibid., 23 and 31 August 1908, 1 September 1908.

152. Ibid., 4 October 1908 and 1st November 1908.

foreign communities under the auspices of the British occupation. While asserting the constitutional rights of the Egyptians, the Party equally stressed the importance of the European residents to the development of the political and economic life of Egypt. Luṭfī al-Sayyid in a meeting in Alexandria impressed upon his audience that,

> "The interests of the European residents are identical with those of the Egyptians. The constitution which we demand today does not infringe on the capitulary rights of the foreigners or the authority of their Consular Courts, and does not undermine the powers of the Mixed Courts." 153

And while strongly criticising the policies of the British Consul-General, al-Jarīdah displayed the utmost caution in presenting its economic and political demands, and refrained from joining hands with the Patriotic Party in its anti-British campaign. The economic crisis did draw the attention of al-Jarīdah group to the harmful effects of the absolute reliance of Egypt on the European financial enterprises, and it demanded the intervention of the Government to check the economic depression and to afford protection for Egyptian industrial projects. However, realising the fact that most of the

153. Ibid., 23 August 1908.

wealth of the country was in effect mortgaged to foreign banks and companies, and aware of the importance of the Europeans to Egypt's economy, the 'Ummah Party reconciled its aspirations for financial independence with the economic necessities of the existing situation. Al-Jarīdah, thus, advocated the co-operation of the natives with the Europeans in commercial, industrial and financial activities, while still impressing upon the Egyptians the necessity of economic independence as a prerequisite for real political independence.[154]

Similarly, the political demands of al-Jarīdah avoided arousing the apprehensions of the foreign communities and, unlike the Patriotic Party, refrained from incurring the irreconcilable hostility of the British authorities. The political aspirations of the Party did not, in the final analysis, threaten Britain's presence in Egypt, but were confined to the moderate demands for the extension of the powers and membership of the representative institutions. A close study of the different proposals which the Party made in this connection would reveal that its purpose was to achieve a wider base of political representation

154. Ibid., 18 May 1908, 21 December 1909 and 1 January 1910.

in the country to accommodate the growing number and influence of the large landowners, and to cope with the different levels of social differentiation existing among the members of this class. Thus while advocating the extension of the functions of the representative institutions, the Party did not recommend a change in the Electoral Law. Al-Jarīdah pointed out that the £E. 50 tax payable as a qualification for membership in the Provincial Councils and Legislative Council was initially imposed in 1883 to confine the membership in these institutions to the class of 'A^{c}yān. But in view of the economic progress which the country witnessed since then, this particular class had greatly increased in number. There was, therefore, no need to change the law to include the lower classes.[155] However, on the question of the Provincial Councils, al-Jarīdah recommended the reduction of the tax qualification to £E. 20.[156] Furthermore, the scheme of the Party for the reform of the Provincial Councils emphasised the desirability of separating the membership in the Councils from that of the Legislative Assembly.[157]

155. Ibid., 18 May 1907.

156. Ibid., 20 May 1907.

157. Ibid., 20 and 22 February 1908.

Similarly al-Jarīdah indicated the necessity of increasing the administrative powers of the ᶜumda to cope with the deteriorating condition of public order in the countryside, and demanded the election of ᶜumdas instead of their appointment by the Government.[158] Al-Jarīdah also urged the Government to increase the number of Provincial Councillors, and to double the number of the members of the Legislative Council as well as to invest in that Council the right to legislate for the native Egyptians.

These proposals indicated the strong desire on the part of the 'Ummah Party to give the members of the Legislative Council a greater share in the administration of the country, while at the same time the membership in the Council was to remain the exclusive privilege of the higher sections of the 'Aᶜyān class. The proposed scheme for the Provincial Councils and the ᶜumda, on the other hand, would seem to allow for the introduction of a larger number of provincial notables of a lower social standing into the administration of the provinces.

In 1908, the Young Turks did not lend the Patriotic Party in Egypt much encouragement, indeed their feelings

158 Ibid., 5 November 1907.

towards the Egyptian nationalists was one of "contempt".[159] But as in time Anglo-Trukish relations gradually ran into some difficulties, a deputation of the Patriotic Party was received in Constantinople, in 1909,[160] and pressure was exercised on the Egyptian Prime Minister to appoint Turkish nationals in the Egyptian administration.[161] The Patriotic Party, under the influence of Sheikh ᶜAbdel ᶜAzīz Shāwīsh, and encouraged by the Young Turks became increasingly associated with the ideas of extreme Panislamism, and eventually lost many of its leading Coptic supporters. The change of heart of the British authorities towards the Copts,[162] the violent attacks of Shāwīsh and the nationalist press against them,[163] and finally the assassination of Buṭros Ghālī, provoked a number of Coptic notables at Assiut to call for a Conference to

159. F.O. 371/449, G. Lowther to Grey, 28 August 1908.

160. F.O. 371/662, G. Lowther to Grey, 29 June 1909.

161. Ibid., R. Graham to Mallet, 11 September 1909.

162. Gorst believed that Cromer had attempted to counterbalance the growing nationalist spirit by leaning on the European residents and the Copts. Gorst, however, was determined to redress the balance. Gorst's Papers, Autiobiographical Note, p. 112.

163. S.M. Seikaly, The Copts Under British Rule, 1882-1914, Unpublished Ph.D. thesis, London University, 1967, pp. 156-159.

voice the grievances of their community. The Coptic move precipitated a Muslim counter reaction. No sooner had the deliberations of the Coptic Congress terminated, than the preparations for a Muslim Congress began.[164]

The 'Ummah Party, despite its political differences with the Agency and the Khedive's Government pledged itself to follow the advice of the Ministry of Interior in order to check the dangerous consequences of extreme Panislamism. Ibrahīm Hilbāwī, a prominent member of the Party and Secretary of the Congress was in constant consultation with the British Adviser for Interior on all matters concerning the Congress, while Luṭfī al-Sayyid served on its organising committee.[165] Owing to the co-operation of the Party with the British authorities and the Government, "political issues were avoided and religious ones treated without display of fanaticism".[166] Cheetham reported at the end of the deliberations of the Congress that, "The Nationalists were present in large numbers, but they

164. Ibid., p. 290.

165. Ibid., pp. 292-293.

166. F.O. 371/1113, Cheetham to Grey, 29 April 1911.

> were precluded from the advocacy of their particular theories by the rules of the committee, and found themselves, moreover, confronted by an organised representation of the party of the people /'Ummah/, which, though acting in opposition to the Khedive and the Government in the Legislative Council, is chiefly composed of men of property, and is not violently anti-occupationist ... The party of the people had gained almost entire control of the committee of the Congress, and Sheikh Shawish and one or two other Nationalists were only admitted as members at the last moment in order that their party might not be represented in the management of the proceedings and that all sections of the Moslem world might be seen united in their resistance of the pretensions of the Copts." 167

The Egyptian Congress served as a popular platform for the 'Ummah Party to give its views a wider circulation. Most of the Muslim press reported the proceedings and discussions of the Congress which chiefly focussed on social and economic issues. But the political significance of the moderating and restraining influence of the 'Ummah Party in the Congress, unquestionably indicated that when an internal conflict - in this case Muslim-Coptic conflict - reached a magnitude which threatened the general framework of the social fabric of the Egyptian society, the 'Ummah Party promptly moved to resolve the conflict peacefully without exposing

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167. Ibid., Cheetham to Grey, 6 May 1911.

the existing framework to a radical change.

These were the general political and economic conditions which prevailed during the period 1907 - 1911. The interaction of al-Jarīdah with the environment produced by these conditions and the ideas which it borrowed from ᶜAbduh and his early disciples, formed the specific ideological and political outlook of the 'Ummah Party. The unity of the elements of this outlook derived not only from the hostility of the Jarīdah-'Ummah group towards the Khedive, but also from the relationships which this elite established with the class of provincial notables and the British occupation.

The works of al-Sayyid and his associates covered a wide range of literary and political subjects. These were, generally speaking, either purely theoretical in the sense that they did not refer to any specific situation, or were 'practical' directly related to the Egyptian situation. The views expressed in al-Jarīdah on the concept of nationalism, the role of the state, political liberty and ethical values were largely drawn from the ideas of western liberal thinkers. On the other hand, the attempt to apply these notions to the existing political and social situation in Egypt

appeared to have a logic of its own, which at many points seemed to reject the superimposition of these imported formulations. For instance, the basic principles of *laissez faire* were abandoned for Government intervention in economic activity and protectionism. However, though some elements of this outlook were inspired by western liberalism, they nonetheless owed their integration into al-Sayyid's practical thought to the fact that they conformed to his general understanding of the Egyptian situation. The secular and rational tendencies were maintained to counter not only Muslim fanaticism but also Coptic reaction to it. Political independence, according to the *'Ummah* Party, remained to be achieved through gradual means and not revolutionary methods which would disrupt society. Whether these ideas originated in Europe or elsewhere seemed irrelevant. In the final analysis only the principle governing the political outlook of the *'Ummah* Party determined the selection and integration of these ideas or their dismissal.

To conclude then, during the 1890s three major political tendencies, which owed their existence to the negative as well as the positive aspects of the development of the process of agricultural production and the

installation of a British administration, appeared on the Egyptian political scene. The consolidation of the system of private ownership of land and the reform of the system of taxation confined the influence of the Khedive chiefly to the Waqfs, the Azhar, and other religious institutions. Simultaneously a new generation of young educated Egyptians, led by Muṣṭafā Kāmil and inspired by the ideal of political independence, began to challenge the British occupation and demand the evacuation of Egypt. The Khedive, eager to regain the lost political influence of his ancestors, lent his moral and financial support to the new Patriotic Movement, and exploited the political and strategic differences between Britain and the Foreign Powers. In view of his reliance on Islamic Institutions in Egypt and his close relations with the Ottoman Sultan, the anti-British campaign of the Khedive was expressed in Panislamic terms. However, once the policy of the British Consul-General towards the Khedive was reversed by his successor, the Khedive abandoned the demand for independence or even a parliament, turned against his Patriotic allies, and proceeded to take advantage of the new situation to enhance his own political position.

Panislamism and Egyptian Patriotism drew Cromer's attention to the crucial importance of rallying to his side a local political force which would check the influence of Kāmil and the Khedive. The class of Egyptians which benefited most from the economic policy and administrative reforms of the occupation, and which occupied a position of social prominence in the provinces and political dominance in the national and provincial representative institutions, naturally formed the basis of Cromer's local political support. The Consul-General recruited a great number of the members of this class to positions of influence in the administration and afforded its spokesmen, members of ʿAbduh's school of thought, every possible encouragement to publish al-Jarīdah. However, a combination of political and economic changes in 1906-07 provoked the members of al-Jarīdah Company, after the departure of their Patron to form the 'Ummah Party in September 1907. Before the end of the same year the other political forces in the country followed suit and organised their own political parties.

Al-Jarīdah, the mouthpiece of the 'Ummah Party, emphasised the decisive role of the class of provincial notables in the regeneration of the nation. It defined

the political and economic demands of this class, and articulated the ideological and political outlook of the Party. Despite the deterioration of the economic and political position of the Egyptian large land-owners, under the rule of the new Consul-General, the 'Ummah Party continued to recognise that the interests of the class of provincial notables lay within the confines of the existing socio-economic structure of the country.

CHAPTER III

THE DEVELOPMENT OF REPRESENTATIVE INSTITUTIONS AND THE 'UMMAH PARTY

Despite the detrimental effects of Gorst's policies on the political and economic situation in Egypt, the class of provincial notables, apart from maintaining its socio-economic position, seemed to achieve a greater measure of political independence and power. This was largely due to the development of local self-governing institutions and the extension of the functions of the existing representative institutions.

Before the British occupation, the ᶜumda was formally appointed by the Government, but the Khedival decree of 10 March 1895 regulated the procedure for the selection of the ᶜumda and defined his functions.[1] Accordingly when a vacancy occurred, names of suitable candidates were submitted to a special commission (Shiakhate Commission) in the province concerned, consisting of the mudīr or his deputy as president, a representative of the Ministry of Interior (who was

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1. See text of the ᶜumda law of 1895 in al-Waqā'iᶜ al-Miṣriyya, 18 March 1895.

usually the British Inspector), the district attorney, and four notables or cumdas of local standing selected by the mudir from among a number of delegates elected by the cumdas of each district in the province. The Commission's choice was then subject to the confirmation of the Minister of Interior. This Commission was also responsible, at the direction of the Ministry, for prosecuting the cumdas, with powers to impose upon them specific penalties and fines, or even cause their dismissal.

In fact, however, the appointment of the cumda remained the prerogation of the Government, and, in many cases, more specifically that of the British Inspector. Yet by virtue of the wide powers which the Shiakhate Commissions possessed, their individual members enjoyed a privileged status in their provinces. It was, therefore, not without significance that the provincial notables attached great importance to their own membership in these Commissions. Evidently the large land-owners were concerned with the appointments made to the post of cumdas in their provinces. But, while they were prepared, under the occupation, to gradually forego the post of cumda in favour of notables of lower standing, they were, nevertheless, keenly interested in becoming members of the Shiakhate Commissions. During the events of 1919, the British Inspectors of Interior were unable to retain their

control over the Commissions, or to secure the appointment of candidates who were amenable to British advice. Consequently, under the influence of the new nationalist movement, members of the Commissions became considerably involved in the political struggle.[2] Thus, the large landowners not only participated in the administration of the provinces, but were able, as members of the Commissions, to manipulate these institutions to achieve their own political ends.

According to Baer, the socio-economic position and the political power of the *cumda* declined under the British occupation.[3] That official's earlier functions in the assessment and collection of taxes, leasing of state land, and recruitment of the peasants for the *corvée* and army service were either abolished or restricted in scope. Similarly, the movement of large landowners to the towns and the effects of Muslim inheritance law, undermined the *cumda's* position. In 1904, Cromer observed that though some of the *cumdas* were very wealthy men with incomes of as much as £E. 20,000 a year, yet in certain

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2. *Milner Mission*, F.O. 848/19, Draft Memorandum on the administration of the Ministry of Interior.

3. Baer, 'The VillageShaykh in Modern Egypt, 1800-1950', (ed.). U. Heyd, *Studies in Islamic History and Civilization*, Jerusalem 1961, pp. 121-153.

districts it was difficult to find candidates who satisfied the property qualification of 10 feddans.[4] Simultaneously, as the ᶜumda became the object of local intrigue and official scrutiny his local prestige would seem to have suffered. In 1903, some 900 ᶜumdas were accused of committing various offences. All the charges were investigated, but only in 96 cases were convictions obtained.[5]

However, the decline in the ᶜumda's position was only relative. Although he was not a salaried official, he was responsible to the authorities for every branch of the administration in matters touching his village. He was called upon to implement, in his village, all the laws and regulations issued by the Government, and to render the central and provincial authorities every possible assistance. In fact, in some ways the authority of the ᶜumda was even strengthened. Before, 1883, he had depended for the enforcement of the laws on his own personal influence and on the assistance of the Mudīr and rural police, but the establishment in 1884 of a khafīr force strengthened his hand, The khedival decree of 10 November 1884 provided for the attachment of this

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1. Egypt No. 1 (1905) cd 2409.

2. Ibid.

force to the Village Council (Majlis al-Balad).[6] This Council consisted of the ᶜumda as president, the Sheikhs of the village, the Ma'zūn (religious sheikh), 4 to 8 ᶜumad al-Muzariᶜīn (local agricultural experts) and a sheikh or more of the khafar depending on the size and population of the village. As head of the Council and with the khafīr force under his control, the ᶜumda's decisions not only acquired the force of law but also the means of implementing it. Most important among the ᶜumda's privileges, especially in the case of those who owned medium-sized estates, were the exemption of the ᶜumda and his sons from military service, and from the payment of a land-tax on 5 feddans of his property within the circumscription of the village. On the other hand, other factors contributed to the retention of the office by some rich farmers. Cromer noted that,

> "It frequently happens that a man of wealth or position, though he cares little for the advantages offered by the Government, is unwilling that a rival should occupy a position of greater administrative and to a certain extent, of greater social importance than himself".[7]

However, in spite of the advantages of the

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6. See Text of the Khafīr Law in al-Waqa'iᶜ al-Miṣriyya, 27 November 1884.

7. Egypt No. 1 (1905) Cd 2409.

office, and in some respects the relative increase in the *c*umda's political influence, the interest of the large landowners in the retention of the office for themselves declined. But as the minimum property qualification for the post was 10 feddans, the great majority of *c*umdas were recruited from among the middle and large landholders. The creation of the Provincial Councils and the national representative institutions further tempted the upper sections of the class of provincial notables to exchange the umdaship for membership in these politically more influential bodies.

Lord Dufferin in 1883 had recommended the creation of the Provincial Councils. Their main function was to assist the mudīrs in the administration of the provinces. Their role was purely consultative, but their advice touched on a wide range of matters of vital economic and political importance to the provinces. They were empowered to recommend extraordinary expenditure on projects of public utility, and were invited to give their views on questions pertaining to irrigation, communications, public security, public health and education. Membership of the Councils was confined to the class of notables who paid a land tax of £E. 50 or more annually. Since, under the British occupation, the average tax per feddan in Egypt did not exceed the

sum of £E. 0.84, it could be safely assumed that almost all the members of the Provincial Councils were drawn from the class of large landowners.

During the Consul-Generalship of Lord Cromer, the functions of the Councils were greatly restricted by the infrequency of their meetings, which were only held at the invitation of the mudīrs. But as the political alliance between the 'Ummah Party and Cromer became stronger, the latter appeared to appreciate the necessity of granting more powers to the Councils. Before leaving Egypt he advised his successor to introduce changes in this particular direction. He wrote: "One of the last proposals I made before leaving Egypt was that the Provincial Councils should be re-organized, their powers somewhat increased ...."[8]

The new Consul, as has been pointed out earlier, awaited a politically more suitable moment to put the scheme into effect, though by that time the demands of the 'Ummah Party has surpassed the concessions which Gorst was prepared to make. Nevertheless, the reform of the Provincial Councils greatly contributed to the growing political involvement and the widening of the influence of the class of provincial notables. In 1909, the Organic

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8. Cromer, Modern Egypt, Vol. 2, p. 277.

Law was amended so as to confer greater powers both in appearance and in reality on the Councils. Substantial changes in the functions, as well as in the structure, of these Councils were introduced. In addition to their previous consultative role, the new amendments authorised the Councils to vote municipal taxes and prepare an annual budget for the Province. The mudīrs were bound to take their opinion in respect of the following: changes in the boundaries of the provinces and the districts; the creation or suppression of local commissions in the provincial towns; the establishment or transfer of Government Schools; buildings or hospitals; the construction of agricultural railways and canals, and the granting of concessions to companies or individuals. The decisions of the Councils were, however, binding in matters relating to the application of certain local regulations, the authorisation of religious fairs and markets, and in determining the number of khafīrs required in the whole province. In addition to being the responsible authorities for elementary education, the Councils were now empowered to spend 30% on secondary and higher education from the total funds devoted to public instruction.

The new reforms had a far-reaching impact in the provinces on the political situation and administrative conditions. Firstly, as a result of the relaxation of

central Government control on the Councils, these bodies began to show more initiative in the provincial administration. Consequently, influential rural families became more interested than ever in securing for themselves a predominant influence in the Councils. In Assiut, the two prominent families of Maḥmūd Pasha Suleimān, president of the 'Ummah Party, and Muṣṭafā Khalifa contested for three consecutive years the seat of Abū Tīj district, and in each year the case was taken to court for a final decision.[10] Secondly, a larger number of councillors were involved in the administration of the provinces. Each district (markaz) was invited to elect two representatives to the Council of the Province. Consequently, while before 1909 the number of councillors ranged between 3 to 8 for a single province, the introduction of the new reforms in 1909 raised the number to range between 6 to 20 councillors. Furthermore, representation in the Councils tended to become more localised. Candidates were no longer elected upon a common list for the whole province, but on the basis of two representatives from each district, where they had for the last two years paid the necessary taxes. But perhaps the most important aspect of the reform was the opportunity it offered for

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10. F.O. 371/6658, R. Graham to Kitchener, 20 March 1913.

an increasing number of the prominent members of the ʿUmmah Party to take part in the administration of the provinces. Even for some one like Aḥmad Luṭfī al-Sayyid, managing editor of al-Jarīdah, the post of provincial councillor seemed to have a special attraction. In 1911, he represented the Simblāwīn district in the Daqahlia Council, but soon resigned due to the pressure of his work in al-Jarīdah.

Throughout the period of 1883 to 1913, membership in the Councils served as a stepping-stone to the entry into the legislative Council and General Assembly. Each Council elected from among its members one delegate to represent it on these bodies. In 1911, despite the opposition of the Khedive, at least ten of the sixteen elected members of the Legislative Council were either members of the Jarīdah Company or leading members of the ʿUmmah Party. Not less than fifteen of the founding members of the Party in 1907, were at the same time members of the Legislative Council.

The General Assembly created in 1883 consisted of eighty-two members. It comprised of all the thirty members of the Legislative Council, the Council of Ministers, and forty-six delegates chosen for six years by electors throughout Egypt. Candidates were requested to be 30 years of age or over, literate, and paying a

minimum annual direct tax of £E. 20. The duties of the Assembly were purely consultative, and it only met when summoned by decree, subject to a provision which was not always respected, that it must be held at least once every two years. It had a decisive voice only in one respect, that of approving certain forms of new taxation or the negotiation of fresh loans. But since it was one of Cromer's major policies to relieve the Egyptian landowner of the burden of heavy taxation, the Assembly tended to accept most of the measures proposed by the Consul-General. It endorsed the Government's decision to suppress the corvée, and approved in 1899 the scheme for the general reassessment of the land tax. But apart from these two cases, this particular aspect of the functions of the Assembly was "particularly inoperative, inasmuch as up to the present time [1906]".[11]

However, during Gorst's term in Egypt, the attitude of the Assembly towards the occupation underwent considerable change. It assumed some political importance on the occassion of its rejection of the Government's recommendation to sanction the extension of the concession of the Suez Canal Company. But normally the Assembly

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11. F.O. 371/68, Cromer's Memorandum, 8 September 1906.

was more concerned with the current national and local issues raised by the 'Ummah Party. These included proposals for the extension of the powers of most of the existing representative institutions, the promotion of secondary and higher education, the creation of a municipality in Cairo, and the sale of Government uncultivated land. At the same time, the Assembly rejected the plans of the Government which were particularly unfavourable to the interests of the landowners. In 1907 it defeated a proposal made by the Government to impose a new land tax for the aid of the kuttābs (village mosque schools), and opposed a scheme which aimed to restrict the area planted with cotton to one third of the property of any landholder.[12] In 1909, the Assembly passed a resolution reiterating the demand advocated by the 'Ummad Party calling upon the Government to grant the nation a constitution.[13] However, following the reversal of the British policy towards the self-governing institutions in Egypt in 1910, the political influence of the Assembly declined.[14]

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12. F.O. 371/245, Cromer to Grey, 8 March 1907, Inclosure 1 and 4.

13. F.O. 371/660, Gorst to Grey, 6 February 1909.

14. Reference here is to Gorst's Memorandum respecting self-government in Egypt, in F.O. 371/890, 22 May 1910.

A politically more important representative body which existed during the period 1883-1913 was the Legislative Council. It consisted of 30 members, sixteen of whom were elected by the 14 Provincial Councils and the two Governorates of Cairo and Alexandria, the remaining members being nominated by the Khedive and his Ministers. The Council met six times a year, or on further occasions when it was summoned by Khedival decree. All the laws and Khedival decrees as well as the annual budget were necessarily submitted to it for discussion, but its recommendations were not binding on the Government.

The relation between the British authorities and the class of large landowners practically governed the deliberations and behaviour of the Council. According to Cromer's annual report for 1905, the Council passed through three phases since its inception. While in the early years of its existence it attracted little political attention, in later years it became hostile to the Government, but eventually Cromer recognised that its attitude towards the occupation was a good omen for the future.

Obviously these stages in the political development of the Council corresponded to the general political and economic progress of Egypt. In the first decade of the occupation the country witnessed the achievement of political stability and financial solvency under a

British administration which paid little attention to the wishes of the Legislative Council. In the early 1890's the Khedive took the initiative in opposing the occupation and momentarily swayed the opinion of the Council against the British. At that point however, the benefits accruing to the large landowners from the economic policies of the Consul-General and the desire of the latter to check the Khedive's activities by summoning the support of ᶜAbduh and his associates combined to consolidate the alliance between Cromer and the Council. Though the small number of the Khedive's supporters in the Council continued to be a source of nuisance for the Consul-General, the majority of the members, however, showed a friendly disposition towards the occupation authorities..

The departure of Cromer ushered in a new phase in the development of the Council, which was characterised by the persistent demand of its members for a constitution and a parliament. On his return from Constantinople in the summer of 1908, the Khedive described the demand for a Constitution as "absurd", but at the same time he felt that such a demand would unite the opposition. "It was true" he said "that the extreme Nationalist party appeared to be moribund, but other and more dangerous parties [meaning the 'Ummah] were growing in power". He advised Gorst to make some nominal concessions in the Legislative

Council, which would make the Egyptians imagine that "they were in Paradise".[15] Accordingly, the Prime Minister promised the Council that the ministers would attend the sessions and take part in the discussions.[16]

However, this evasive method of meeting the requests of the Council failed to satisfy the majority of its members, who felt that the new privilege was nothing but a right which the Council already possessed.[17] The Khedive and the Consul, consequently, resorted to more devious measures to eliminate from the Council the undesirable elements who opposed their policies. Members of the Khedive's household frequently interfered in favour of the election of his supporters to the Council, while the British officials in the Ministry of Interior encouraged the mudīrs to oppose the election of anti-British candidates. In 1911, the Acting Consul-General reported that 'Isma'īl Pasha, head of the 'Ahāza family, represented the Sharqia province in the Council, but his influence was persistently used for the purpose of intrigue against the occupation. The mudīr of the province, under instructions from the Government, took steps to prove to the

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15. F.O. 371/452, R. Graham to Grey, 18 September 1908.
16. Ibid., Gorst to Grey, 10 December 1908.
17. F.O. 371/654, Gorst to Grey, 25 November 1909.

population of the province and members of its administration that they would be safe from reprisals from 'Isma^{c}īl Pasha if they resisted the 'Abāzas. 'Isma^{c}īl Abāza was thus defeated, and the Government candidate won the seat allocated for the Sharqia province in the Council. The report of the Acting Consul concluded that "The influence of the Abazas is thus broken and a number of men in the province who are not afraid to show British sympathies have come to the front".[18]

Though such pressures exercised by Government officials tended to undermine in some cases the political influence of the 'Ummah Party inside the Legislative Council basically the Party, by virtue of its control over the electorate in the provinces, managed to hold its ground. During the debates on the proposal of the Government to revive the Press law of 1881, the Party secured enough votes to defeat the motion, but at the instigation of the Khedive and the Agency, the Government disregarded the decision of the Council and passed the law. Towards the end of Gorst's term in Egypt, the Adviser of Interior accurately described the position of the 'Ummah Party in the Council and in the country at large in the following terms:

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18. F.O. 371/1114, M. Cheetham to Grey, 29 July 1911.

> "Founded some six years ago, with the tacit approval of Lord Cromer, to act as a moderating influence in Egyptian politics and as a counterpoise to the Khedive, it is principally composed of large landed proprietors, such as Mahmoud Pasha Suliman, of Assiut, and Sharawi Pasha of Minieh. It is strongly represented on the Legislative Council, where Barakat Bey is its principal spokesman. Its press organ is the "Garida" (about 4,200 readers), edited by the intelligent and plausible Lutfi Bey Sayid. Within a year of its formation, this party turned against the Agency, though it has always depended upon us for protection from the Khedive. Latterly, since the policy of the "entente", [between Gorst and the Khedive] the party has been violently hostile to the Government and has opposed all measures in the Legislative Council, attacking the Government on every possible occasion. ... It is the best organised and most powerful political party in Egypt at present, having considerable funds at its disposal. At the recent Provincial Council and Legislative Elections it ran candidates with some success, and the Government was obliged to bring pressure to bear against it, in view of the open-hostile attitude it had adopted. ... Although useful to us at times, this party must not be allowed to become too powerful".[19]

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The Legislative Council and the 'Ummah Party regained much of their previous political influence under the Consul-Generalship of Lord Kitchener. This followed the gradual dissolution of the earlier understanding between the Khedive and the British authorities and the

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19. P.R.O. 30/57, piece no. 36, from a report on "The Political Parties in Egypt" prepared by R. Graham, 10 April 1911.

growing political and personal antagonism between Kitchener and the Khedive. By the early months of 1912, the new Consul expressed his desire to grant the Egyptians a greater measure of self-government. The attitude of the 'Ummah Party inside the Legislative Council seemed to reinforce Kitchener's intentions in that direction. He noted that the work of the Council since his arrival in Egypt "has to be recorded with satisfaction". He, in addition, felt that previous experience showed that there were organic defects which militated against the success of the Council. He therefore proposed to abolish the General Assembly and legislative Council, and institute on different lines in their place the legislative Assembly. The new arrangement he thought would "give the Egyptians a fresh chance of working out their own future representative institutions by proving that they are worthy of the confidence reposed in them".[20]

However, this act of benevolence on the part of the Consul-General, in addition to the economic and administrative reforms which he introduced, was largely inspired by his appreciation of the existing political and financial situation in Egypt. Kitchener sought to undermine the position of the Khedive by resorting to a

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20. Egypt no. 1 (1914) cd. 7358.

greater measure of British control over the machinery of the state and reverting to Cromer's policy of personal Government. Similarly he appeared to afford the 'Ummah Party some encouragement to counter the activities of the Khedive, but was at the same time, perhaps under the influence of the views of his Adviser for Interior, against the continued growth in the political power and social influence of the Party, which would eventually pose a threat to the British interests in Egypt. He accordingly introduced legislative reforms which were specifically aimed at achieving "a fuller representation of the views of smaller land-owner class and others".[21] His concern for the small peasant was thus partly governed by a tendency to check the growing influence of the large landowners and preserve the political stability among the different classes in society, and partly to perpetuate the Cromerian maxim of preventing the displacement of Egyptian landowners by Europeans. Furthermore, he attempted to remedy the economic situation of the country by increasing Government expenditure on the construction of irrigation and drainage schemes and the extension of railways.

Many of the measures he introduced were inspired by his admiration for Cromer's earlier policy in Egypt,

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21. F.O. 371/1362, Kitchener to Grey, 14 April 1912.

and in fact on several occasions he invited the latter's advice. On the other hand, Kitchener continued to apply the repressive measures which he inherited from Gorst to intimidate the members of the Patriotic Party and to suppress the nationalist press. Between 1911 and 1914, the harassment of the leaders of the Patriotic Party by the authorities brought about the departure of ᶜAbdel ᶜAzīz Shāwīsh and the flight of Muḥammad Farīd from Egypt.

The total effect of Kitchener's policies in Egypt not only strengthened the political influence of the medium landowners, but unintentionally further consolidated the position of the large landowners.

Though at the beginning of his term in Egypt, Kitchener appeared to be satisfied with the Khedive,[22] soon, however, the relation between them underwent a change. Kitchener's policy tended to check the growing political power of the Khedive and undermined some of his private financial schemes. The duties of the British Inspectors in the provincial administration were revived,[23] and Kitchener began to interfere with the administration of the Waqfs. At the request of the Prime Minister,

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22. F.O. 800/48, Kitchener to Grey, 24 January 1912. Kitchener wrote: "The Khedive is working well, and I have no difficulty with him".

23. G. Lloyd, Egypt since Cromer, Vol. II, London, 1934, p. 157.

Muḥammad Sa^{c}īd Pasha, Kitchener had advised the Khedive to dismiss the trustee in charge of the properties of Princess Ṣāliḥa and her children.[24] Though the Khedive on that occasion had promptly responded to the Consul's request, the event, nevertheless, precipitated a ministerial crisis which ended in the resignation of Sa^{c}d Zaghlūl. Similarly during the summer of 1912, Kitchener frustrated the efforts of the Khedive to sell the Mariout railway to a German firm. By the end of the year, it was evident that the differences between the soverign and the Consul had become irreconcilable. The former, at this point, resorted to his earlier policy of inciting anti-British feeling among his subjects, and concluded an agreement with the Patriotic Party and the nationalist press. Furthermore greatly irritated by the interference of the Prime Minister, supported by Kitchener, in matters relating to the Waqfs, the Khedive attempted to provoke a ministerial crisis to force the resignation of the Prime Minister. Kitchener, however, reacted by threatening to rely on the support of the 'Ummah Party, and stated:

> "I feel myself that we should support Mohammed Said, who has done well, and generally acted pretty straightly. So I am inclined to let it be secretly known that, in case of a change, we might think

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24. F.O. 800/48, Kitchener to Grey, 7 March 1912.

> of the Party of the People, which has some very respectable members. They are chiefly large landed proprietors ... and not friends of the Khedive. If he understands that they may be given a chance of forming a Ministry, I imagine I shall hear very little more about a new Cabinet".[25]

Kitchener's warring was effective, and the Khedive temporarily abandoned the idea of attempting a ministerial change. However, conflicting issues continued to contribute to the deterioration of the relation between the British authorities and the Khedive, and eventually caused the two parties to rally to their side their old respective allies. The Khedive reached an agreement with the Administrative Committee of the Patriotic Party and paid a sum of £E. 1000 to al-ᶜAlam newspaper,[26] an act which, according to Muḥammad Farīd, rendered the organ of the Party a mere instrument of the Khedive.[27] Similarly, Kitchener, in the hope of winning the support of the 'Ummah Party, pressed the Foreign Secretary to approve the introduction of a scheme for constitutional reform in Egypt. He explained that underlying the demand of the "better classes" for reform was

"a general belief that the creation of a public

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25. Ibid., Kitchener to Grey, 8 December 1912.

26. Farīd's Memoirs, Notebook no. 3, pp. 76-77.

27. Ibid., p. 83.

> opinion which will effectively support Ministers, is the only means of checking the undue demoralizing influence of the Khedive. It is realized that the Ministers unaided are quite unable to control him, and that this Agency alone can do so. Respectively natives are satisfied that we shall not allow any overt act of tyranny, as long as we are here, but they are froissés at having to rely on the unreguralized interference of a foreign Power in their affairs, particularly as regards semi-religious matters and cognate subjects, in the direction of which the Khedive is supreme, and I fear systematically appropriates religious endowment funds bequeathed for public benefations".

Kitchener then pointed out that, since his arrival in Egypt, he had attempted with some success to recover the confidence of the Egyptians in Britain, but felt that this confidence "will be rudely shaken if constitutional reform is put on one side without an alternative policy". Kitchener added, "those who now loyally support us will absolutely lose hope for the future".[28] Early in 1913, the Consul-General foiled a second attempt made by the Khedive to sell the Mariout railway to an Italian Syndicate. The Secretary-General of the Italian Foreign Office admitted to the British Ambassador in Rome that,

> "encouragement had been given to the syndicate because the Italian Government hoped thereby to obtain some hold over the Khedive and prevent him from intriguing in Cyrenaica by the hope of financial advantages".

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28. F.O. 800/48, Kitchener to Grey, 2 March 1913.

The Ambassador was also informed that if the Italians

> "were to sacrifice the influence thus secured and advocated the renunciation of the option by the Syndicate, we [British] ought, in recognition of their attitude, to endeavour to obtain through the Khedive the recall of Aziz Bey, [Aziz al-Masri, Commander of the Turkish Army in Cyrenaica] and help them in other matters to which they attached importance".[29]

The direct rapprochment between the Khedive and a foreign Power, however, provoked the strongest reaction on the part of the Consul-General. He proposed to warn the Khedive that similar attempts to sell the Mariout line would lead the British Government "to take your Highness's whole position into serious consideration", but after consultation with the Foreign Office a slightly milder reprimand was communicated to the Khedive. The issue was finally settled in February 1914, when the Railway Department of the Egyptian Government agreed to buy the line from the Khedive.[30] The transaction was concluded so as to compensate him for his loss of his direct control over the Waqfs Administration.

Partly to regain the confidence of the 'Ummah Party, and partly to reduce the Khedive's political influence, Kitchener, while in England during the summer

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29. F.O. 371/1637, R. Rodd to Grey, 26 March 1913.

30 F.O. 371/1966, Kitchener to Grey, 6 February 1914.

of 1913, obtained the approval of the Foreign Secretary to implement Cromer's recommendation of 1906, to place the Waqfs under a responsible Minister assisted by a Muslim Council. On his return to Egypt, he met the Khedive and strongly condemned his support for the anti-British campaign led by the Patriotic Party and al-Mu'ayyad. He then told him that despite the latter's objections, the British Government had decided to create a Waqfs Ministry, demanded from him a termination of the scandals caused by the sale of grades and decorations, and asked for the removal of some of his unsatisfactory entourage.[31] When the Khedive appeared to be reluctant in complying with the Consul's orders, Kitchener made it known to him through some of the Ministers that, in case of his continued refusal, "action will be taken for his deposition". In an interview with Sa^{c}d Zaghlūl, the Khedive went so far as to claim that Kitchener on that occasion threatened to send British troops to occupy the Qubba Palace.[32] This was not a mere political bluff on the part of Kitchener, who had already informed the Foreign Office that there was no great difficulty in removing the Khedive, "as he is generally hated throughout

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31. F.O. 371/1640, Kitchener to Grey, 7 and 9 November 1913.

32. Zaghlūl's Memoirs, Notebook no. 23, 26 December 1913.

the country". Kitchener's hand was further strengthened by a recent message which he received from the Ottoman Grand Vezir, who stated that,

> "His Highness's reception in Constantinople had not in any way changed Ottoman Government's opinion of him, and that if it became necessary for the good of Egypt that even the highest personage should be removed Ottoman Government would willingly co-operate".[33]

The Khedive, realising the increasing weakness of his position, acquiesced in Kitchener's scheme for the reorganisation of the Waqfs,[34] and offered his assurances that all grades and honours would be properly awarded.[35] Less than a week later, a decree was signed creating a Ministry and a Supreme Council of the Waqfs. The same decree instituted the Ministry of Agriculture, in response to the traditional demand of the 'Ummah Party for the protection of the agricultural interests of the country.

The Khedive's political influence was further reduced when he was prevented from taking part in the appointment of the nominated members of the new legislative Assembly. He bitterly attacked the Government for the

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33. F.O. 371/1640, Kitchener to Grey, 9 November 1913.

34. Ibid., Kitchener to Grey, 12 November 1913.

35. Ibid., Kitchener to Grey, 13 November 1913.

selection of "incompetent candidates who failed to win the elections".[36] The Ministry thus became again a subject of controversy between the British authorities and the Khedive. Kitchener, despite the assurances of the Khedive, suspected the latter's intentions to provoke a ministerial crisis which in its turn would lead to the dismissal of the Prime Minister. He warned the Khedive that there was no reason for a change of Ministers and demanded the immediate removal of his entourage.[37] However, by the end of March, 1914, the position of the Prime Minister became untenable and the Khedive, forestalling Kitchener's possible objections to a change in the Ministry, proposed the appointment of Muṣṭafā Pasha Fahmī.[38] The latter, influenced by the views of his son-in-law, did not reach an understanding with the Consul-General, and the post was eventually offered to Ḥusain Rushdī Pasha.[39] Nevertheless, the hostility of the British authorities towards the Khedive continued.

On his departure to Europe in 1914, the Khedive expressed his wish to visit England again, but Kitchener

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36. Zaghlūl's Memoirs, Notebook no. 23, 26 December 1913.
37. F.O. 371/1967, Kitchener to Grey, 16 March 1914.
38. Ibid., Kitchener to Grey, 28 March 1914.
39. Ibid., Kitchener to Grey, 5 April 1914.

advised the Foreign Office that, in view of the fact that the Khedive

> "has not yet dismissed the entourage I told him we objected to last November, and about which I have reminded him more than once, so I do not think it desirable to show him any favour, if you would agree this would be a suitable reason".[40]

Subsequently, the First World War broke out in August and the Khedive was not allowed to return to Egypt.

The political power and the personal prestige of the Khedive, during the period 1911 to 1914 sharply declined to a level which it had never reached before. Lord Kitchener not only restricted the Khedive's interference in the working of Government departments and institutions, but also threatened the basis of his real power in the country by challenging his authority over the religious institutions and particularly the Waqfs.

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Though the Consul-General was keenly interested in the speedy recovery of the economic situation, he was at the same time equally concerned with the maintenance of political stability and the preservation of the existing division of labour between the Egyptian farmer and the European financier. He realised, following the example

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40. Ibid., Kitchener to Grey, 19 May 1914.

of Cromer, that an atmosphere conducive to economic growth could be achieved by the increase of Government expenditure on public works and by Government legislation for Egyptians as well as European residents.

During the first year of his administration in Egypt, Kitchener became aware of the necessity of increasing Government spendings on railways, agriculture, public works and provincial services.[41] Similarly, during that year, his attention was drawn to the problem of the financial indebtedness of the small peasants. He was informed that,

> "Unless some steps are taken, to counter-balance the great facility given to Userers, since the establishment of the National Bank of Egypt - a very large portion of the small farms must in time pass from the hands of the Natives to those of Europeans of the very worst type. The Governor of the National Bank, although using on interest very considerable sums of the Government money - says to a very large portion of those Natives who approached him:-
>
> "We are a Bankers bank", in other words "We are a userers Bank" go you to the Userer pay him from 36 to 60°/o and he will supply you - next day the bank takes over the Bill or note of the Native with of course the signature of the userer or so called Banker on it, and gives him a very extensive credit of 5 1/2 to 6 1/2°/o and this is shown in the account as "Bankers accounts" ... twelve

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41. Egypt no. 1 (1913) cd. 6682, see proposed Government expenditure for year 1913.

> of those local userers are the relations of one of the Directors of the National Bank".[42]

The dangerous dimensions of the problem prompted the Consul-General to enact the Five Feddan Law, which aroused the opposition of the money-lending classes and the European business community.[43] Likewise, the London Committee of the Agricultural Bank of Egypt strongly objected to the new law and drew the attention of the Foreign Secretary to its damaging financial effects on the functions of the Bank.[44]

In the long run, the situation of the fallāḥ who continued to rely on the local money-lender as his main source of credit, did not significantly change,[45] but the immediate impact of the new law certainly reduced the confidence of the European interests in the British authorities.

Kitchener privately proposed the creation of a Council to advise him before his seeking final approval of the Foreign Office on legislation which would be binding

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42. P.R.O. 30/57, no. 42, Enclosure on Five Feddan Law, note dated 4 March 1912.

43. F.O. 371/1364, M. Cheetham to Grey, 29 July 1912.

44. Ibid., London Committee to Grey, 14 August 1912.

45. Baer, History of Landownership ..., p. 90.

on Europeans. However, Cromer warned him that apart from the Five Feddan Law, which rudely shocked the confidence of the monied classes, the new scheme would further deal a serious blow to the interests of the European Communities in Egypt.[46] Kitchener appeared to take Cromer's advice to heart and abandoned his plan for effecting a radical change in the system of capitulations.

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During Kitchener's prescence in Egypt, the critical disposition of the 'Ummah Party towards the British occupation gave way to a more friendly attitude. This change coincided with the gradual detericration of the relation between the Consul-General and the Khedive, and the increasing willingness of the British authorities to grant some of the administrative and legislative demands of the Party.

During the early months of 1912, Kitchener on several occasions had expressed his satisfaction with the Khedive, and hoped that within a year he would be able to reduce all the political parties in Egypt to the same dying state as that of the Patriotic Party.[47] Consequently, al-Jarīdah described the new regime as being autocratic.

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46. P.R.O. 30/57, No. 44, Cromer to Kitchener, 30 July, 1913.
47. F.O. 800/48, Kitchener to Grey, 24 January 1912.

Luṭfī al-Sayyid, unable to define the policy of the new Consul-General towards the Khedive, claimed that his rule was, nevertheless, autocratic.[48] And in contrast to the political position of Abduh's associates during the Taba Incident of 1906, al-Sayyid not only accused the Egyptian authorities of preventing Egyptian volunteers from joining the Ottoman forces in Libya, but also stated that it was Egypt's duty to lend its support to Turkey in its war against the Italians, or, at least, observe the Egyptian nationality law and respond to the national feeling by facilitating the passage of Ottoman troops through Egypt. a legal right which according to al-Sayyid the Ottoman Government possessed in Egypt.[49]. Similarly, al-Sayyid criticised the British authorities for allowing the exploitation of the Egyptian peasantry in the interest of British financial and commercial firms, while on the other hand affording no such encouragement to the idea of the creation of agricultural co-operatives or a national Egyptian bank. Genuine reform, he claimed, was only achieved by granting the nation a constitution.[50]

However, towards the end of March 1912, as the

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48. Al-Jarīdah, 9 January 1912.

49. Ibid., 1 October 1911.

50. Ibid., 4 February 1912.

intention of the Government to improve the system of representation in the country and to introduce legislative measures for the protection of the small peasant and effect the improvement of the state of public security in the provinces became apparent, al-Jarīdah adopted a less critical attitude towards the occupation. In his opening speech to the General Assembly in March 1912, the Khedive announced that the Government was carefully considering changes in the Organic law of the country to allow for the introduction of a better system of representative institutions.[51] On April the 11th, al-Jarīdah reported without comment that the Government was investigating legal measures to protect the interests of the peasants.[52] Less than a month later, al-Jarīdah published the proposed law creating the Cantonal Courts, but again refrained temporarily from expressing its views on the subject. However, on the 20th May, al-Sayyid urged the nation to accept and make use of this useful measure, and added that it made no difference whether it was inspired by the Consul-General or the Egyptian Government.[53] This marked a turning point in the attitude of the 'Ummah Party towards

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51. F.O. 371/1362, Kitchener to Grey, 14 April 1912.

52. Al-Jarīdah, 11 April, 1912.

53. Ibid., 20 May 1912.

the occupation, which provoked al-ᶜAlam newspaper to renew its personal attack on al-Sayyid and on his Party. Similarly, al-Sayyid thanked the Government for the promulgation of the Five Feddan Law, but at the same time explained that without the creation of agricultural co-operatives or relieving the fallāḥ from the burden of his earlier debts, the new measure would be insufficient for his protection from the money-lender.[54] Al-Jarīdah then praised Lord Kitchener for the distribution of 1000 feddans in the Gharbia Province to 200 landless peasants.[55] On the occasion of the publication of Kitchener's report for 1912, al-Sayyid wrote that the financial section of the report was comprehensive and met the aspirations of all Egyptians. He also added that politically the report revealed the genuine desire of the Government to extend the powers of the Legislative Council during the summer of 1913. The implementation of such a scheme, al-Sayyid noted would not confine the services of Kitchener to Egypt to the economic sphere, but would extend his constructive efforts to the social and political aspects of the life of the nation for which he would deserve the

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54. Ibid., 30 June 1912.

55. Ibid., 18 December 1912.

gratitude of all Egyptians.[56] Al-Jarīdah furthermore in the face of the growing criticism of the European business community, tended to defend the Government's economic measures. Al-Sayyid, while announcing in the best tradition of western liberalism that the three functions of the Government were the establishment of public order, the administration of justice and the defence of the country from aggression, admitted that in view of the existing conditions in Egypt the Government should take upon itself to perform other functions which would contribute to the remedy of the backwardness of the country.[57] He wrote:

> "It may not be in conformity with the doctrine of liberalism to advocate the interference of the Government in the economic sphere, But the country is in the first stage of its modern revival and the state should take upon itself to encourage the development of its economic potential. Undoubtedly, this could be achieved by the establishment of a national bank and agricultural co-operatives, which would form the basis of the economic system".[58]

The aspiration of the prominent members of the 'Ummah Party to win the election for the new Legislative Assembly led them to seek a policy of reconciliation with

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56. Ibid., 8 June, 1913.

57. Ibid., 28 September 1913.

58 Ibid., 13 January 1914.

the Government and the British authorities. A few months before the elections a raprrochement was reached between the managing editor of al-Jarīdah and the Prime Minister,[59] whose position at that time wholly depended on the support of Kitchener. Similarly, in the hope of winning the blessings of the Consul-General and the British Adviser for the Interior, al-Jarīdah paid tribute to their efforts, which, it maintained, were made to ensure the absolute freedom of the elections.[60] Al-Sayyid asserted in his electoral manifesto that the enactment of the new Organic Law was a step in the direction of granting Egypt a constitution. He also expressed his absolute satisfaction with the progress of the scheme of the Government to introduce self-government and lauded the initiative of the administration in the protection of the freedom of individuals and the interests of the farmers. On reading the document, Zaghlūl commented with some contempt that "not even Kitchener himself could have adopted a better programme".[61] Other prominent members of the 'Ummah Party, on the other hand, were in close contact with Kitchener personally. Muḥammad Mahmūd, the son of the

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59. Zaghlūl's Memoirs, Notebook no. 23, 18 October, 1913.

60 Al-Jarīdah, 23 October 1913.

61. Zaghlūl's Memoirs, Notebook no. 23, 3 December 1913.

leader of the Party, acted as the intermediary between Zaghlūl and Kitchener, when the latter sounded out Zaghlūl whether he would co-operate with the occupation in his capacity as the elected vice-President of the Chamber, in running the affairs of the newly-formed Assembly.[62]

Even though the results of the elections were on the whole favourable to the 'Ummah Party, al-Jarīdah reverted to its previous criticisms of the Government and the occupation. Early in January 1914, al-Sayyid blamed the Government for its infringement on the rights of the nation. He deplored, rather belatedly, the methods it adopted in the setting-up of the Ministries of Waqfs and Agriculture, and the promulgation of the new Organic Law, without reference to the existing Legislative Council or General Assembly.[63] He further stated that the Agricultural and National Banks of Egypt as well as the Five Feddan Law would continue to have detrimental effects on the whole economy of Egypt until a real Egyptian national bank and cooperative societies were created.[64] Though the new Assembly, he claimed, had a larger membership than the Legislative Council, yet its voice remained purely

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62. Ibid., 8 December 1913.

63. Al-Jarīdah, 10 January 1914.

64. Ibid., 13 January 1914.

consultative and, with the exception of minor modifications, its functions were the same as those of the Council.[65]

Undoubtedly, the results of the elections failed to satisfy the expectations of the 'Ummah Party, and the conspicuous interference of the Government in favour of some of its own supporters was in some cases detrimental to the party's interests. The managing editor of al-Jarīdah and some of the party members in Lower Egypt were not returned, while a prominent landowner, ᶜAlī Pasha Shaᶜrāwī, was returned with some difficulty. Inside the Assembly, the 'Ummah-Jarīdah group led by Saᶜd Zaghlūl on many occasions joined hands with the Patriotic Party in its opposition to the Government. At some point, at least, al-Sayyid appeared to entertain the idea of winning the Khedive's good-will. During the famous tour of the Khedive in the provinces in 1914, al-Sayyid invited his bwildered disciple Husain Haykal to join him in the reception of the Khedive whom he claimed had changed.[66] At the same time the decline in the prices of cotton during the year 1913-14, and the failure of the Government to meet the situation aroused the concern of al-Sayyid

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65. Ibid., 17 January 1914.

66. M.H. Haykal, Mudhakkarātī fī al-Siyāsa al-Maṣriyya, Vol. 1, Cairo, 1951, pp. 58-59.

and his associates. Numerous articles appeared in al-Jarīdah inviting the Government to intervene in favour of cotton growers, and al-Sayyid repeatedly made the plea for the creation of a national bank and cooperative societies.

The disenchantment of the 'Ummah Party with the new Assembly and the economic policy of the Government was only a symptom of the growing rift between the Party and the British authorities. The years which followed the departure of Lord Cromer had a far-reaching effect on the political behaviour and political demands of the Party. The cooperation between the Khedive and Gorst and the slow economic recovery of the country not only contributed to the development of an independent political position but also produced a sense of political solidarity among the members of the 'Ummah-Jarīdah group. On the other hand, Kitchener's autocratic rule and his often declared intention to eliminate all the political parties hardly inspired any kind of confidence in his policy among the members of the 'Ummah Party. By the time of Kitchener's appointment, the Party had already articulated its political demands and acquired a predominant social and political influence in the countryside. In any political alliance with the British authorities, the Party was no longer satisfied with the role of the junior partner. It was now

seeking to secure its position against the unpredictable changes in the policies of the successive British Consuls. By insisting on the right of the nation to a constitution and to the extension of the legislative powers of the new Assembly, the Party was in fact emphasising its own determination to win an independent political influence in the country. Similarly, the Party encouraged, and often took a leading part in, the establishment of independent institutions to represent the interests of different professional groups in Egypt. On December 4, 1909, Luṭfī al-Sayyid had been elected Vice-President of the Press Union, which in November 1912, the newly-formed Union of Egyptian Lawyers elected Ibrahīm al-Halbāwī, its first President. Likewise, early in 1914, the decline in the prices of cotton instigated a group of large landowners and cotton growers (who included among them a number of the members of the 'Ummah Party) to form a society whose aims were the defence of the interests of the cotton growers.[67] Moreover, at that time Ḥassan ᶜAbdel Rāziq and Ṭalᶜat Ḥarb were among the leading members of the Egyptian Chamber of Commerce.

In spite of the growing dissatisfaction of the

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67. See al-Jarīdah, 18 March 1914 for the names of the members of the executive committee of the society.

'Ummah Party with the political, and, to some extent, the economic system of the country, there was no tendency to advocate a radical change in the existing social order or to question the status of the British occupation. The Party maintained its friendly attitude towards the foreign communities and refrained from joining the Patriotic Party in its more extreme demands for evacuation or complete independence. On the whole, the Party benefited from the reforms which were introduced by Lord Kitchener.

Underlying the Consul's determination to establish the new Assembly was his feeling, acquired soon after his arrival in Egypt, that the existing representative institutions were "of very little, if indeed of any, value to the country".[68] He explicitly drew the attention of the Foreign Secretary, who was reluctant to reverse his earlier decision in 1910, to the extreme inadequacy of the existing system of Government, to meet the demands of the "better classes" of the community. He also warned that if the British Government did not show itself in favour of his moderate proposals, then he would lose all the local support, and consequently would have to establish a protectorate over the country, a course which he felt was far from the Secretary's views and entirely out of

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68. F.O. 371/1362, Kitchener to Grey, 14 April 1912.

the question.[69] Evidently the Consul-General took special personal interest in the creation of the new Assembly, which led some of the British officials in Egypt to refer significantly to it as Kitchener's "child".[70]

The major purpose of the reform was to effect a change in the electoral system and in the numerical strength of the Assembly, in order to bring about the representation of the smaller landowners and different interest and minority groups in the Egyptian society.[71] There was, however, no intention to extend the powers of the Assembly to exceed those which the earlier institutions possessed. In agreement with Kitchener's views, Cromer wrote "As you say ... it is quite essential that the last word should remain with the Government".[72] Accordingly, though the Electoral Law was modified to allow for an increase in the membership of the new Assembly, its powers remained practically the same as those of the Legislative Council and General Assembly.

The new Organic and Electoral Laws of 1913

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69. F.O. 800/48, Kitchener to Grey, 2 March 1913.

70. Wingate's Papers, Box 469/5 Clayton to Wingate, 29 December 1913.

71. F.O. 371/1362, Kitchener to Grey, 14 April 1912.

72. P.R.O. 30/57, no. 42 from "Enclosure and Reports 1912", Cromer to Kitchener, 25 July 1912.

abolished the Legislative Council and General Assembly and constituted instead the Legislative Assembly. The new Assembly was composed of 82 members, 17 of whom were nominated by the Government, while the remaining 65 were elected from the Governorates and the provinces. The British authorities made every possible effort to secure the nomination and election of candidates who were favourably disposed towards the occupation. Attempts were also made to curb the entry of hostile elements into the Chamber. Clayton noted that,

> "The Government were anxious that he [Sa^{c}d Zaghlūl] should not get in and Graham [Adviser of Interior] told me before the election that they were trying to find a candidate to successfully oppose him - however, they were not very successful as he got in for <u>two</u> divisions - Saide Zenab and Ezbekieh".

Clayton added with some disappointment,

> "I think it is a pity they tried to oppose him without being certain of being successful as it has got out that they were anxious to prevent his getting in, and the result has been rather a triumph for his supporters".[73]

The Adviser of Interior viewed the results of the elections with great satisfaction. He reported that, with the exception of the Khedive's supporters and the candidates

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73. <u>Wingate's Papers</u>, Box 469/5, Clayton to Wingate, 22 December 1913.

of the Patriotic and 'Ummah parties,

> "The Government can count on a majority of the remaining 38 elected members of the Assembly and it is probable that most, if not all, the new members of indeterminate opinions will, if skilfully handled at the outset, come under its influence. Moreover it has nominated 17 members to the Chamber".[74]

The majority of the members of the new Assembly were drawn from the Egyptian rich landowners. The examination of the list of its members showed that, at least, 71 of them were landowners, and with the exception of ᶜAlī Shamsī who owned some 20 feddans, they were all proprietors of 50 feddans or more.[75] The greatest concentration of their landholdings was in the range of 200 feddans or more, which clearly indicated that the membership in the Assembly tended to favour the representation of the upper sections of the large landowning class. In terms of occupation, apart from 59 members who were exclusively classified as landowners, the rest included 9 lawyers, 4 merchants, 4 ᶜulamā' and heads of religious sects, 3 engineers, 2 doctors and an ex-army officer. The

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74. F.O. 371/1964 'Note on the First Election for the Egyptian Legislative Assembly' R. Graham, 29 December 1913, p. 15.

75. Ibid., Most of the information in this section pertaining to the size of the properties of the members of the Legislative Assembly is drawn from the report prepared by the Adviser of Interior. Graham estimated

F/note contd. on next page

reserved estimate of the Adviser of Interior that the 'Ummah Party held 14 seats in the new Assembly led him to conclude that,

> "Although a Government majority is practically assured the results of the elections ... were on the whole favourable to the "Party of the People". ... This party represents all that is best in the class of large country land-owners and, although its policy has been marked by a consistent hostility to the Khedive and the present Prime Minister and not seldom by a transparant selfishness where its own interests are concerned, it has never shown itself unreasonable towards the occupation or unamenable to the influence of the British Agency".[76]

However, the deliberations in the Assembly soon proved that the assessment of the Government forces inside the Chamber made by the British Adviser was too optimistic. The names of 30 members at least of the new Assembly either appeared on the list of the founders of al-Jarīdah Company or were close associated with the 'Ummah Party since its formation. Among them was Sa^{c}d Pasha Zaghlūl, who, following his resignation from the Government in 1912, re-established his political and personal links with the

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Footnote 75 contd. from previous page

> that the number of landowners in the Assembly was 59, and thus overlooked the fact that some of those whom he classified as merchants or members of the liberal professions were also landowners.

76. Ibid., p. 14.

Party. The British Adviser referred to him, on the occasion of his election to the Assembly, as being a member of the 'Ummah Party who would possibly lead the opposition against the Government inside the Chamber.[77] L.J. Cantori pointed out that,

> "An analysis of all the roll calls in which the assembly divided along government and opposition lines, reveals a list of 34 names who on a majority of occasions voted with Sa^{c}d against the government".[78]

R. Graham consequently realised that though the Chamber "was by no means badly disposed towards the Government" when it first met in January 1914, towards the middle of the session, however, the majority of the members were hostile.[79]

Under the leadership of Sa^{c}d Zaghlūl and ^{c}Abdel ^{c}Azīz Fahmī, the 'Ummah Party formed the bulk of the opposition to the Government inside the Chamber. The division between Government supporters and the opposition centred around the issues which the 'Ummah Party raised to satisfy its aspiration for the extension of the powers

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77. Ibid., p. 49.

78. L.J. Cantori, The Organizational Basis of an Elite Party: The Egyptians Wafd, Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, University of Chicago, 1966, pp. 31-32.

79. F.O. 371/1969 'Report on the First Session of the Egyptian Legislative Assembly', R. Graham, 26 June 1914.

of the legislature. The Government endeavoured at the beginning of the session to confer upon the nominated President of the Assembly sufficient powers to control the proceedings, but the majority of the members foiled the Government's attempt. Similarly, Zaghlūl on several occasions protested against the creation of the Ministries of Waqfs and Agriculture without previous consultation with the Assembly. At the same time, the Assembly resisted the attempts made to introduce new administrative measures designed to establish Government control over the agricultural cooperative societies. However, when pressure was brought to bear on the members of the Assembly, they endorsed by a small majority the amendments proposed by the Government on the new law of Agricultural cooperatives. Zaghlūl, the elected Vice-President of the Assembly, declared that the vote "had stultified the Chamber, and had rendered his own position untenable". Consequently, in protest, he did not attend the subsequent meetings of the Assembly which adjourned till the autumn of 1914.[80] But perhaps the most important issue which was the subject of heated discussions in the Assembly was the question of who would preside over the meetings in the event of the absence of the President. Naturally the 'Ummah Party

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80. Ibid.

supported the claim of the elected Vice-President against that of the nominated Vice-President, but eventually the Government's motion won by 44 to 32 votes, the majority including the 8 Ministers.

The Government exercised some measure of influence over the 'Ummah Party through the intervention of the Consul-General. Kitchener often demanded from Zaghlūl not to obstruct the legislative and administrative measures proposed by the Government. He warned him that if the Assembly voted illegal the action of the Government in moving a group of Egyptian convicts to the Sudan, the decision would settle once and for all the question of the Sudan "being in any way part of Egypt ..."[81] Similarly, he informed Zaghlūl that it was the desire of the British Government that the Chamber should pass the Criminal Bill submitted by the Egyptian Government.[82]

However, despite the interference of the Consul-General in the proceedings of the Assembly, and the threatening tone which he frequently took to achieve his ends, the 'Ummah Party continued to utilize its strong position in the Chamber to express its views on the current

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81. Wingate's Papers, Box 469/6, Clayton to Wingate, 11 February 1914.

82. Zaghlūl's Memoirs, Notebook no. 22, 26 December 1913.

political issues and to assert the right of the new Assembly to legislate for the native Egyptians. Though the existence of the Assembly was shortlived, the changes brought about by the promulgation of the Organic and Electoral Laws of 1913 had a far-reaching effect on the future political developments in Egypt.[83]

The new law widened the basis of national representation in the country, but still confined it to the upper sections of the large landowning class. At the same time, it tended to perpetuate on a political level, the process of social differentiation by the separation of the membership in the Assembly from that of the Provincial Councils. Compared to the old Legislative Council, the number of the members of the new Assembly was almost three times as large, while the proportion of the elected to the nominated members was greater than that of the Legislative Council. The eligibility age was raised from 30 years to 35, while the amount of tax payable as a qualification, except for a slight reduction in the case of those who paid a house tax or were holders of higher educational diplomas, was maintained at £E 50. On the other hand, the requisite amount of land tax for candidates to the

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83. See text of the Organic and Electoral Laws of Egypt, 21 July 1913, in Egypt no. 3 (1913), Cd. 6875.

Provincial Councils was reduced from £E 50 to £E 35, and for candidates of higher education it was further reduced to £E 14. The new Electoral law categorically emphasised the abolition of the earlier procedure of combining the post of provincial councillor with that of the membership in the Assembly and established the principle of the separation of the two functions.

These measures resulted in the increase of the numerical strength of the Assembly, and, consequently, the introduction of a larger number of provincial notables into the political administration of the country. In the Old Council, each of the provinces was represented by only one member, but in the new Assembly the provinces returned a total of 59 representatives many of whom abandoned their seats in the Provincial Councils to become members of the Assembly. On the other hand, the reduction of the tax qualification for candidates to the Provincial Councils led, during the elections of 1913-1914, to the introduction of a large number of provincial councillors who were drawn from the class of middle landowners. From a British point of view this coincided with the initial desire of the Consul-General to break the virtual monopoly of the large landowners over the national and local self-governing institutions, and check their predominant political and social influence in the countryside, while simultaneously

broadening the base of British support among the smaller landowners in the countryside.

Mainly motivated by this same principle, and partly influenced by administrative and judicial considerations, Kitchener, towards the middle of 1912, set-up the Cantonal Courts in the provinces. These courst were empowered to settle claims in ordinary cases up to a limit of £E 5 to £E 10, and were entitled to decide on disputes involving the rectifications of field boundaries, and to administer justice in other small local matters according to tradition and custom. To each Cantonal Court were appointed five judges chosen from among the notables of the district by the Minister of Justice.[84] The Government proposed that the candidates should own property in the districts where the courts to which they were attached were located, but significantly failed to specify the nature or size of this property. The members of the Legislative Council, however, perhaps aware of the danger to themselves of allowing the small peasants a certain measure of influence in these courts argued in favour of establishing a tax qualification. The Government reluctantly gave way to the pressure of the Council and accepted the application of a tax qualification of £E 15.

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84. Egypt no. 1 (1913), Cd. 6682.

The practical results of the measure naturally led to the recruitment of judges for the Cantonal Courts from among the class of provincial notables and the middle landowners.

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To conclude then, the development of representative and semi-official institutions in Egypt during the period 1883 - 1914, tended to favour the involvement of an increasing number of large landowners in the political system of the country. Heads of leading families in the provinces were keenly interested in securing for themselves a position of social and political prominence by becoming members of the General Assembly, the Legislative Council, the Shiakhate Commissions and the Provincial Councils. This process gained further impetus by the reform of the Provincial Councils in 1909, which resulted in the active participation of a still larger number of notables in the administration of the provinces. Furthermore, the political and administrative reforms introduced by Lord Kitchener produced several important changes in the functions and structure of the existing representative institutions. The new measures consolidated the political position of the large landowners and increased their numerical strength in the newly-formed Legislative Assembly. On the other hand, the creation of the Cantonal Courts and the promulgation of the new Electoral Law were advantageous to

the political interests of the middle landholders and the lower sections of the class of provincial notables, who by the end of the 19th century had already acquired a substantial measure of control over the *umda institution in the villages.

The 'Ummah Party enjoyed a considerable political influence in these institutions, and was therefore strongly in favour of the extension of their functions. Consequently, as the Party gradually moved in the direction of asserting its relative political independence from the British authorities its demands increasingly focussed on the necessity of entrusting the new Assembly with wider powers of legislation. The constitutional movement which emerged after the War was chiefly inspired by this same principle, which simultaneously formed the starting point for the more popular demand of the Wafd Party for complete independence.

The death of Gorst in 1911 and the appointment of Kitchener to the British Agency in Cairo reversed the political and financial fortunes of the Khedive. The power which he possessed over the administration of the religious institutions was greatly reduced, and his deposition at the beginning of the War was to a large extent a natural culmination of this process.

CHAPTER IV

THE POLITICAL ASPIRATIONS OF EGYPT DURING THE WAR

Early in August 1914, the War broke out while the Khedive was still on his summer visit to Instanbul. The British Agency "had for long suspected his intrigues at the Ottoman Porte, and did not wish for his return".[1] The Acting Consul first advised the Foreign Office to delay his return,[2] and at a later date further emphasised:

> "It is quite certain that return of His Highness would be the greatest mistake and would prejudice, if not destroy, present satisfactory state of affairs".[3]

Consequently, the Khedive was deposed in December 1914, and his position was offered and accepted by Prince Ḥusain Kāmil, with the title of Sultan. Furthermore, Egypt was declared a Protectorate.

A number of measures were introduced to meet the new military and economic situation created by the War. Martial Law and military censorship on the press were

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1. Vatikiotis, p. 244.
2. F.O. 371/1968, Cheetham to F.O., 6 August 1914.
3. F.O. 371/1970, Cheetham to Grey, 31 August 1914.

established, while a large number of the members of the Patriotic Party and almost all the members of the Khedive's household were arrested. Several princes and the Minister of the Waqfs, who were suspected of Khedivist leanings were asked to leave the country. On 9 November, a fetwa was published signed by 27 leading ʿulamāʾ urging the Egyptian people to respect the new system of government and refrain from all political activity.[4]

At the same time, steps were taken to ease the strain of the financial situation caused by the failure, at the beginning of the War, to sell Egypt's cotton crop. The Financial Adviser described the immediate effects of the crisis on the large landowners in the following terms:

> "Their recklessness in borrowing money is well-known, and a large proportion of them have mortgaged their lands to a very large extent. They naturally will be unable to pay the instalments and are thus in a very precarious situation ... It is this class which is at the root of the present discontent which is being fomented by political and foreign agitators".[5]

The Adviser of Interior explicitly warned that "if the crop was not sold the blame would ... be laid upon the British authorities, and that public opinion would be

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4. F.O. 371/2355, 'The General Situation in Egypt", R. Graham, 27 December 1914.

5. F.O. 371/1960, Note by the Financial Adviser, 26 October 1914.

alienated from us".[6] The Egyptian cotton growers and merchants quickly reacted to the new situation which posed a threat to their interests. On 8 August, the leading merchants and landowners of the Egyptian Chamber of Commerce appointed a standing Committee to consider the immediate measures necessary for the protection of these interests.[7] Subsequently, a delegation met the Prime Minister, who assured its members that their demands for the postponement of the payment of debts, and a government loan of £E 2 per kantar of cotton would be sympathetically considered.[8] The Egyptian Government thus took effective measures to remedy the deteriorating situation. Arrangements were made for the large proprietors to borrow money from the National Bank, while half of the land-tax for the month of November was added in equal portions to the December and January instalments. In addition, the Government decided to assist the small proprietors by the purchase of part of their cotton crop.[9]

It was precisely during the period leading up to the declaration of the Protectorate, when the financial

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6. Ibid., Graham to Cheetham, 25 October 1914.
7. Al-Jarīdah, 9 August, 1914.
8. Ibid., 9 September, 1914.
9. F.O. 371/1969, Cheetham to Grey, 24 October, 1914.

interests of the Egyptian landowners wholly depended on the goodwill of the British authorities that the Agency effected, without any serious opposition, a major change in Egypt's political and international status. The previous determination of the class of provincial notables to win a certain measure of self-government and political independence gradually weakened as their reliance on the occupation authorities rapidly increased. The attempts of the 'Umnah Party in concert with the Egyptian Prime Minister, at the beginning of the War, to extract some political concessions from Britain in return for their cooperation in the War effort, soon gave way to a more conciliatory attitude on their part.[10] The call of Luṭfī al-Sayyid on the Egyptian Government to maintain "Egypt's tradition of absolute neutrality under any circumstances".[11] was unhesitatingly superseded by his demand, less than a week later, for the declaration of a state of war in Egypt and the establishment of Martial Law. He stated that the participation of Britain in the War rendered Egypt's neutrality meaningless, and, therefore, it was the duty of the nation to lend the Government all the support

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10. Al-Sayyid, Qissat Hayātī, pp. 162-164.

11. Al-Jarīdah, 2 August, 1914.

needed for the defence of the country.[12] Al-Sayyid explained to his disciple Ḥusain Haykal that this change in policy was only temporary pending the results of the discussions between the Prime Minister, Ḥusain Rushdī, and the British authorities. He added that the Prime Minister hoped to obtain an undertaking from Britain to recognise Egypt's complete independence at the end of the War.[13]

On 30th October, Rushdī spoke officially to the Acting Consul and the British Adviser of Interior regarding the

> "necessity of accompanying a declaration of war with Turkey by an announcement of a larger measure of self-government for Egypt. He declared that his own attitude and probably that of his colleagues would be entirely influenced by paragraph in our proclamation relating to this subject, that, if it was satisfactory to him, he would gladly remain in office and render us his loyal support, but that otherwise he would relinquish his post and retire into private life".[14]

However, further discussions led the Prime Minister to accept the proclamation of war with Turkey, and satisfy himself with a British undertaking, which was never respected, to the effect that the entire responsibility

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12. Ibid., 8 August, 1914.

13. Haykal, Mudakkarātī ..., Vol. I, pp. 65-66.

14. F.O. 371/1970, Cheetham to Grey, 30 October 1914.

of the defence of Egypt would be carried out by the British forces.[15] In the first military engagement with the Turks at the Canal, an Egyptian Officer was among the first to fall. Wingate remarked on the incident:

> "It is a curious thing that the first one to fall in the war should be an Egyptian Officer, and yet Maxwell's Proclamation stated that the Egyptians would not be called upon to fight".[16]

The new Sultan and the Prime Minister were very hesitant to accept the declaration of a protectorate without securing from the British authorities a promise to grant Egypt a measure of self-government. When Cheetham sounded Prince Husain Kamil to see if he would accept the Sultanate, the latter explained:

> "at the moment when Islamic feeling throughout Egypt will be stirred by fact of war against Caliph he could not accept Khediviate without grant or promise of autonomy to Egypt under British suzerainty".

The British Government, on the other hand, refused to make any such concessions and instructed the Agency

> "to declare Annexation of Egypt thus getting rid of all difficulties about succession to Khedive and giving Egyptians at once the status of British subjects. November

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15. Ibid., Cheetham to Grey, 5 November 1914.

16. Wingate's Papers, Box 157, Wingate to Herbert, 25 November 1914.

> nineteenth when troops arrive from India would be a suitable occasion".[17]

The decision of the British Cabinet, however, coincided with the measures taken by the Financial Adviser to relieve the anxiety of the Egyptian landowners. This enabled Cheetham to report that the obstacles to the establishment of a Protectorate "are now I hope largely overcome here".[18] He later added: "Prince Hussein's views have somewhat progressed and that he wishes to accept [Khedivate]".[19] The new sovereign appeared to be more interested in the throne and the honours attached to it rather than in championing the demand for autonomy. He expressed his desire to be awarded the title of Sultan, a separate flag and a new coinage to commemorate his accession to the throne.[20] He told the Acting Consul that he realised that Britain must govern Egypt but

> "in his belief a Moslem Chief was necessary to Egypt from religious point of view and could be of eminent value to Empire through his influence in Arabia ... he felt now that he could accept a Protectorate and

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17. F.O. 371, Cheetham to Grey, 1 November 1914.

18. Ibid., Cheetham to Grey, 20 November 1914.

19. Ibid., Cheetham to Grey, 23 November 1914.

20 F.O. 371/1970, Cheetham to Grey, 18 November 1914.

co-operate heartily with us under that regime".[21] On 5 December he handed Cheetham a note urging Britain to entrust the Muḥammad ʿAlī family with the hereditary leadership of Egypt, and to determine on a permanent basis the order of succession.[22]

Consequently on December 18, Egypt was proclaimed a British Protectorate. The next day the Acting Consul while formally offering Prince Ḥusain the Sultanate informed him that with the elimination of Ottoman suzerainty, the restriction upon the number and organisation of the Egyptian Army and upon the Khedive's prerogative to award honorific distinctions would disappear. He further added without making any specific commitments that it was Britain's intention to "accelerate progress towards self-government".[23]

The political and administrative measures implemented after the breakout of the War did not only terminate for the time being the process of the development of self-governing institutions in Egypt, but also suppressed

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21. F.O. 371/1971, Cheetham to Grey, 3 December 1914.

22. Ibid., Cheetham to Grey, 8 December 1914.

23. F.O. 371/3722, Cheetham to Prince Ḥusain Kāmil, 19 December 1914.

earlier steps taken in that direction. Eager to avoid the complications and the embarrassment which might arise from the discussions in the Legislative Assembly, the British authorities and the Egyptian Ministers agreed in the first instance to suspend the November session of the Chamber. This was followed by successive suspensions which ended the existence of the Assembly. Similarly, the reversion of the functions of the Egyptian Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the British Agency deprived Egypt of an important aspect of its nominal political independence.

However, despite these measures the Prime Minister and to a large extent the leading members of the now inactive Legislative Assembly and the 'Umnah Party continued to entertain ideas of Egyptian Political autonomy. Their hopes were greatly encouraged by the new High Commissioner, Henry McMahon who, as the Turkish offensive on the Canal became imminent, felt that in order to allay the growing anti-British sentiment among the Egyptians a small concession must be made

> "in the form of giving the Legislative Assembly a slightly larger voice in certain religious and charitable institutions, which badly need reform and in which our direct intervention is not desirable".[24]

But with the defeat of the Turkish attack on Ismailia,

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24. F.O. 800/48, McMahon to Grey, 4 February 1915.

the interest of the High Commissioner in the matter declined,[25] while the elected Vice-President of the Assembly regarded the new proposal with little favour.[26] A more ambitious proposal however, was made by the Prime Minister who, after consultation with Zaghlūl, submitted a memorandum regarding the future government of Egypt under the Protectorate.[27] The main purpose of his project was to reconcile Britian's interests in Egypt with those of the European business community and the political aspirations of the Egyptian nation. He proposed to entrust Britain with the defence of the country, the supervision of Egypt's finances, the application of laws to foreigners, and the conclusion of political agreements with other countries. He favoured the introduction of such measures which would consolidate the position of the new Sultan and at the same time moderately add to the existing powers of the Legislative Assembly, He stated that Egypt should

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25. In an interview with Zaghlūl on 8 April 1915, McMahon said that the Assembly should remain dormant until the end of the War. Zaghlūl's Memoirs, notebook no. 25, 8 April 1915.

26. Ibid., 26 March 1915. Zaghlūl advised the Sultan not to entrust the legislative Assembly, which was exposed to pressure from the British authorities, with the task of reforming the religious institutions.

27 See Ibid., 10 March 1915 for the Arabic text of the memorandum.

become a constitutional monarchy with a hereditary ruler who would possess all the royal honours and prerogatives attached to the post. The Prime Minister also recommended the modification of the Organic Law to allow the Assembly a decisive voice in matters pertaining to the nationality law, the Sharī'a Courts, the Waqfs, the religious and civil institutions of education and the system of taxation.

Evidently the Prime Minister and Zaghlūl acted with the tacit agreement of the Sultan who frequently expressed to the High Commissioner his desire to establish the succession to the Sultanate on the basis of primogeniture in the direct line.[28] However, under the pressure of the War, the British authorities tended to give little consideration for these demands, while the attitude of the Sultan and his Prime Minister seemed to fluctuate according to changes in the local and international situation.[29]

The British occupation of Baghdad in 1917, and the success of the Sharīf of Mecca aroused in the Sultan wider ambitions. He felt that with the disappearance of

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28. F.O. 800/48, McMahon to Grey, 27 April 1915, and F.O. 371/2356, McMahon to Grey, 23 May 1915.

29. On 6 March 1915, the Sultan categorically informed Zaghlūl that he did not wish the Assembly to convene nor to extend its powers. Zaghlūl's Memoirs, notebook no. 25, 8 March 1915.

the Ottoman Caliphate after the War and the establishment of Britain's predominant influence over a large number of Muslim countries, Egypt could become the centre of that world. In his conversations with the High Commissioner, he pointed

> "to Cairo as the great centre of Islamic teachings ... he hopes to see Cairo figure as one of the most, if not the most important of the world's Islamic centres.
>
> For this reason I [Wingate] can see that he is not altogether enamoured of the Sherif's movement or of the large measure of support, financial and other, which we are giving it ... There is perhaps a tinge of jealousy on the Sultan's part of the Sherif's success, and perhaps he feels ... that if he were a younger man and in good health he might himself aspire to be Khalif".[30]

In a note addressed to Graham in the Foreign Office, the Sultan expressed his hope that Syria would become part of the British sphere of influence. He warned that

> "avec "Damas" à une Puissance etrangere, c'est le monde Syrien Musulman séparé des autre Musulmans et uni sous un autre drapeau, ce qui ne manquerait pas, de crèer bien des difficultés dans l'avenir et des frictions".[31]

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30. F.O. 371/3722, Wingate to Harding, 17 April 1917. Regarding the aspiration of Sultan Husain and at a later date Fu'ad to become the Caliph see E. Kedourie, 'Egypt and the Caliphate, 1915-1946', Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, London, 1963, pp. 208-248.

31. Wingate's Papers, Box 164, Sultan Husain to Graham, 27 March 1917.

The Sultan entertained the idea of acquiring under British tutelage, a prominent position of moral influence among the Arabs, while at the same time curbing the Sharīf's bid for Syria. In an interview with M. Sykes in 1915, he explicitly "expressed his conviction that Syria should form part of the Egyptian Government".[32]

Towards the end of May 1917, both the Sultan and his Ministers were

> "seeking some modification of the settlement under the Protectorate as so far defined or, at any rate, an interpretation of it which will leave administration more in their hands heretofore".[33]

The Prime Minister approached the / Commissioner . with the view that while the external functions of the Department of Foreign Affairs should remain in the hands of the Residency, the internal functions should revert to the Egyptian personnel in the Department. The High Commissioner replied that though

> "This question might conceivably be examined at a later and more convenient date. For the moment it is not one which I can put before the Foreign Office when so many more important issues require consideration".[34]

Similarly, the demands of the Sultan were gradually brushed aside. The Commissioner reported that he induced

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32. Ibid., Box 158, M. Sykes to War Office, 14 July 1915.

33. Ibid., Box 237, Wingate to Graham, 28 May 1917.

34. Ibid., Box 164, Wingate to Hardinge, 29 May 1917.

the Sultan to agree with him that,

> "during the war and when we are all so fully occupied with war work, any drastic changes of organizations were out of the question and we must be content to go along as at present".

By that time owing to the fact that the British forces were checked in Gaza, and following the Russian military failures, the Sultan's mood had already changed. His ideas of "a great Anglo-Egyptian-Arab-Moslim combine" seemed to disappear, and his attitude tended to become more pessimistic.[35]

In the meantime, the precarious state of the Sultan's health confronted the British authorities with the problem of succession. The debate which ensued between the advocates of an annexationist policy and the protectionists in Cairo and in London was resolved in favour of the views of the latter. Lord Hardinge informed the High Commissioner that the idea of annexing Egypt would not only deprive Egypt of its role as a Muslim centre, but would also be repellent to the 70 million Indian Muslims. He wrote:

> "It seems to me that such a policy would be a serious error and should be avoided at all costs. At the end of the War it is probable that leading Egyptian Ministers and other notables will visit this country and there

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35. Ibid., Wingate to Hardinge, 17 June 1917.

> will then be an opportunity of finding out what their real feelings are in this kindred subject".[36]

The second problem which the British authorities had to contend with was the choice of a successor to Sultan Husain, in the event of his sudden death. Several candidates were on different occasions considered, but the discussion finally centred around two of them, namely the Sultan's son and Prince Ahmad Fu'ād, partly because he had shown himself for many years to be a convinced Anglophile and partly because the Sultan's son, who was married to the ex-Khedive's sister, declined the offer when made to him.

On the occasion of his accession to the throne in October 1917, the new Sultan requested from the High Commissioner

> "to convey to his Majesty's Government his determination to follow the high example set by Sultan Hussein, and to labour, in close and loyal co-operation with His Majesty's Government for the greatest good of Egypt".[37]

But less than a month later, the Commissioner noted that in the course of a conversation between Sultan Fu'ād and the Secretary of State for India it was revealed that

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36. F.O. 371/3722, Hardinge to Wingate, 7 May 1917.

37 F.O. 371/2928, Wingate to Balfour, 9 October 1917.

> "our Egyptian friends are all out for as complete autonomy as they can get. It appears that the Sultan said to Montague that he hoped that Egypt would be granted full autonomy in due course, to which the latter ... replied "But, Your Highness would appear to have already considerable autonomy in Egypt. Thereupon the Sultan turned to Rushdi ... and said: "Listen to this Rushdi, Mr. Montague thinks we have autonomy in Egypt" and followed his remark with a hearty laugh".[38]

A few weeks later, the Sultan and Ḥusain Rushdī proposed the replacement of the Ministers of Waqfs and Agriculture by Sa^{c}d Zaghlūl and ^{c}Abdel ^{c}Azīz Fahmī respectively.[39] This seemed to be part of an attempt to strengthen the Government's popularity and simultaneously reassert the right of the sovereign in the appointment of his Ministers. In an interview with the Acting Financial Adviser, the Prime Minister elaborated a similar scheme to that which he presented to the High Commissioner early in 1915. He proposed that

> "Great Britain's rights to interfere ought to be clearly limited and rigidly defined, being restricted to finance, foreign relations, army and possibly justice. Intervention of His Majesty's Government in choice of Ministers was described as "abuse". British officials ought to be cut down in number, and ought to be chosen by Egyptian Government by reason of their technical qualifications, though ... His Majesty's Government were

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38. F.O. 371/3722, Wingate to Graham, 3 November, 1917.

39. Ibid., Wingate to Hardinge, 29 November 1917.

> to be allowed to advise as to value of those qualifications. Advisers ought to be technical advisers subordinate to their Ministers, who would take no part in politics. All these matters were to be regulated by a Convention after the war".

Furthermore, the Sultan now joined his Prime Minister in his effort to introduce a division of control of Egyptian foreign affairs between the Residency and the existing Department staffed by Egyptians.[40]

However, neither the Foreign Office nor the High Commissioner were in any mood to concede part of Britain's influence in Egypt to the new Sultan or his Government. On receiving his instructions from London, Wingate informed Ḥusein Rushdī that the British Government did not favour the appointment of Zaghlūl and Fahmī, and felt that the time had not come to discuss his political programme. Bearing in mind Hardinge's message to Wingate of May 7, the latter wrote:

> "In conclusion I suggested to the Prime Minister that it might be better to meet London half-way and withdraw the proposed changes. Later on I had little doubt, I said, he would visit England with the Sultan and their views would then carry greater weight".

The Prime Minister for the time being accepted the decision of the British Government, but the High

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40. F.O. 371/2928, Wingate to Balfour, 9 December 1917.

Commissioner though satisfied with this result sounded a note of warning. He wrote:

> "for the moment at any rate - we shall have no more advanced political programmes, though we must expect a very frank exposé of National aspirations when the war is over and the settlement has to be made of several pending questions".[41]

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During the War, the political privileges of the class of provincial notables were systematically eroded. Their successful efforts in earlier years to introduce a change in the Organic Law and representative institutions soon were discontinued. The Legislative Assembly which ended its first session in June 1914, never met again, and its members were left to voice their discontent in private. The establishment of press censorship further limited the scope of political activity and reduced the press to a mere source for the dissemination of selected information on the progress of the War. Luṭfī al-Sayyid soon after the outbreak of the War resigned his post as managing editor of al-Jarīdah, and temporarily left Cairo to reside in his village. Other leading members of the 'Ummah Party also felt the strain of the new repressive measures taken by the British authorities. Ḥamad al-Bāsil,

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41. F.O. 371/3722, Wingate to Hardinge, 24 December 1917.

head of the Rimah tribe of the Western Desert, was suspected of intriguing with the Sinūsī and placed under police surveillance. Muḥammad Maḥmūd was accused of maladministration and forced to resign his post as the Governor of the Beheira province. At the same time the establishment of Martial Law greatly reduced the opportunities of work for the increasing number of Egyptian lawyers.[42] Many of the members of the Assembly including Zaghlūl and ᶜAbdel ᶜAzīz Fahmī, who were left with little political influence were seeking employment in Government departments and public firms. Some of them who were associated with the Patriotic Party were interned. Zaghlūl, in his capacity as the Vice-President of the Assembly frequently complained to the Prime Minister about the injustices committed against them by the Military authorities, and regularly appealed to the Sultan to effect the release of those interned. On many occasions the members of the 'Ummah Party who met Zaghlūl to discuss the political future of Egypt parted without reaching any practical conclusions. They obviously feared that any misinterpretation or suspicion of their motives would lead to their arrest.[43] On many instances rumours of their imprisonment became

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42. Zaghlūl's Memoirs, Notebook no. 29, 31 December 1916.

43. Ibid., Notebook no. 28, 15 March 1918.

widespread. Luṭfī al-Sayyid recalled that when his father heard the rumour that Zaghlūl had been arrested, he was greatly alarmed and urged his son to accept a Government post which the Sultan had offered him earlier.[44]

The loss of the freedom of the press and other means of political expression, and the suspension of the Assembly, greatly undermined the independent political position of the 'Umnah Party and the class of provincial notables. At this point the temporary interests of the newly-appointed Sultan Ḥusain and that of the Party coincided. The Sultan, despite his weak character and largely unsuccessful efforts, made in cooperation with his Ministers some attempts to restore part of the political influence which his predecessor had been forced to surrender to the British under Kitchener's pressure. At the same time, the 'Umnah Party, unable to put forward independently its programme for the future administration of the country, sought the assistance of the Sultan and the Ministers. However, in this relationship the initiative remained in the hands of the sovereign, whose presence at the head of the Egyptian administration was an essential part of the new system of the Protectorate.

In mid 1917, a combination of personal and

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44. Al-Sayyid, Qiṣṣat Ḥayātī, pp. 166-167.

political factors rendered the attitude of the Sultan very pessimistic towards the progress of the war and the future of his country.[45] At this stage his Prime Minister suggested to him that instead of making futile complaints of a personal nature he should propose a programme for the future administration of Egypt. The Sultan took the Prime Minister's advice seriously and asked him to prepare a note on the subject. Bearing in mind the relatively conflicting aspiration of the British, the sovereign, and the Legislative Assembly, Rushdī set to work on his scheme with the intention of resolving these differences. He proposed that Egypt should become a constitutional hereditary monarchy with a Government responsible to the King and not to parliament. Britain, he advised, should be entitled to occupy any part of Egypt it deemed necessary for the defence of its interests and the country, and retain the Sirdarship (Commanding-Officer of the Egyptian Army), and the overriding powers of the Financial Adviser, while limiting the functions of the other advisers to a purely consultative one. Furthermore, the Prime Minister recommended that the promulgation of laws should be subject to the agreement of the parliament.[46]

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45. Wingate's Papers, Box 237, Wingate to Hardinge, 17 June 1917.

46. Zaghlūl's Memoirs, Notebook no. 31, 25 July 1917.

Before communicating the substance of his scheme to the Sultan, Rushdī invited Zaghlūl, al-Sayyid, and other leading members of the 'Umnah Party to express their views on the subject. Zaghlūl strongly objected to the excessive powers which the project conferred upon the Sultan and the British occupation. Al-Sayyid drew a new scheme which embodied the traditional demands of the Party. He insisted that the Government should be responsible to an elected parliament, while the monarch would exercise his authority through the Government and the parliament. He also proposed that once the position of a British Adviser became vacant, an Egyptian official must replace him, and that the functions of the present Financial Adviser should be strictly consultative. In agreement with his colleagues, al-Sayyid further recommended that Britain should retain the Sirdarship, but limit her occupation of Egypt to the Canal area when the country faced an external threat.

The deterioration of the Sultan's health prevented the Prime Minister from submitting the new scheme to the sovereign. The project thus remained dormant until the accession of Fu'ād to the throne. Towards the end of the year both the new Sultan and his

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47. Ibid., 9 August 1917.

Prime Minister in their conversations with the High Commissioner and the Financial Adviser seemed eager to revive those parts of the programme which favoured the consolidation of the powers of the sovereign.[48] However, their efforts in this direction failed, and a short interval of time had to elapse before a new opportunity offered itself to make fresh proposals.

In the meantime the hopes of the members of the 'Ummah Party for reaching a satisfactory agreement with the occupation authorities faded. At a dinner party to which Muḥammad Maḥmūd invited Zaghlūl, ᶜAlī Shaᶜrāwī, ᶜAbdel ᶜAzīz Fahmī and al-Sayyid the discussions turned to the subject of Egypt's future after the War. All those present, with the exception of Fahmī, who was extremely pessimistic, agreed that the prospects of achieving a settlement in the near future were quite remote. Zaghlūl noted regrettably that the spirit of solidarity among them was very weak.[49] But though the element of fear and despair tended to dominate the attitude of these men, a growing feeling of hostility and resentment towards the occupation at the same time emerged. In March 1918, this

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48. See pp.

49. Zaghlūl's Memoirs, Notebook no. 28, 19 January 1918. Zaghlul appeared to regard Fahmī's pessimism to be relatively greater than that of the rest of his colleagues.

feeling was aroused by the introduction of some economic and military measures which directly threatened the interests of the Egyptian cotton growers.

In 1917, the export of Egyptian cotton to the United States created a great deal of anxiety in London and Liverpool. Consequently, measures were taken to prevent the British steamers from bringing direct shipments of cotton to the United States. At the same time additional arrangements were made to provide for the protection of British trade interests in Egyptian and Indian cotton. The Board of Trade early in February 1918, sent a Mission to Egypt to organise the cotton trade. After consultations with the British Officials in the Egyptian administration and the representatives of the English export and banking houses in Alexandria, the head of the Mission, Sir H.L. Smith, discussed the matter in general and guarded terms with Rushdī Pasha. Then without reference to the Egyptian growers and merchants, the Mission proposed the creation of a Commission to fix the prices and control the purchase of cotton from the producers. Smith urged that, in view of the fact that some Ministers knew in general terms the kind of action contemplated, it was, therefore, impossible to guarantee the continued secrecy of the scheme and was necessary to sanction its application as soon as

possible.[50]

Early in March, 1918, the Cotton Control Commission was formed under the Chairmanship of R. Lindsay, the Undersecretary of the Egyptian Ministry of Finance, and the membership of B. Hornsby, the Deputy Chairman of the National Bank of Egypt, K.P. Birley of Peel's House, R. Carver, a leading British exporter, and K. Lewis, the Director-General of the Egyptian Customs. Soon afterwards, the Commission fixed the price of cotton at 42 dollars a kantar. This provoked the strongest reaction among the large landowners including the Sultan, who apart from being one of the largest proprietors in Egypt was deliberately left in the dark regarding the matter. Zaghlūl, who only learned the news from the press, blamed the Government for the betrayal of the interests of the whole nation.[51] He told the Minister of Education, ᶜAdlī Yeghen that by monopolising the purchase of the cotton crop the Government was in fact depriving the people from what was rightfully theirs. ᶜAlī Shaᶜrāwī and ᶜAlawī Pasha Gazzār shared Zaghlūl's views, and felt that the time had come to express their objections. At

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50. F.O. 368/1899, H.L. Smith to A. Stanley (Board of Trade), 24 February 1918.

51. Zaghlūl's Memoirs, Notebook no. 28, 14 March 1918.

one point Zaghlūl suggested that "We should raise our voice in protest by calling a meeting of all those whose interests are at stake". But realising that the country was still under the military rule he added: "However, any meeting at present would have grave consequences".[52] For a while the fear for their personal safety appeared to restrain their determination to protect their financial interests, and the initiative thus remained in the hands of Sultan Fu'ād.

The lack of tact with which the British authorities and the Egyptian Ministers treated the Sultan aroused his suspicions. He felt that there was an attempt to isolate him from participation in major decisions, and, therefore, sought to enlist the support of those elements in the country who were similarly dissatisfied with the situation. He approached Ismaʿīl Sidqī, the ex-Minister of Waqfs who resigned his post in 1915 following a private scandal, and asked him to convey to Zaghlūl his views regarding the recent changes in the cotton policy. On 19 March, Sidqī visited Zaghlūl and informed him that the Sultan was greatly disturbed at the irresponsible attitude of his Ministers who in concert with the occupation acted without his consent or permission. Sidqī added that the

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52. Ibid., 15 March 1918.

Sultan would appreciate receiving his loyal subjects, and would welcome an opportunity to listen to the views of the distinguished men among them. Zaghlūl readily agreed to visit Sultan Fu'ād and induced Shaᶜrāwī Pasha to act similarly.[53] Two days later, Zaghlūl had an audience with the Sultan who complained that his Ministers now only referred to him only after decisions, as in the case of the cotton question, were already taken. Zaghlūl, encouraged by the Sultan's attitude, decided to meet the High Commissioner.[54]

On meeting Wingate, Zaghlūl remarked that had it not been for the importance of the issue, he would not have ventured to waste the Commissioner's precious time. He then proceeded to express his great concern at the rumour that the Government was intending to fix the price of wheat at a value which would hardly meet the cost of its production. He also deprecated the failure of the Government and the British Trade Mission to invite the informed opinion of the Egyptians landowners before embarking on their new cotton policy. Wingate replied that these measures were dictated by the military requirements and the interests of the Egyptian farmers, and,

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53. Ibid., 20 March 1918.

54. Ibid., 21 March 1918.

therefore, could not become the subject of public discussion. However, Zaghlūl pointed out that the peasant was only too well aware of the fact that while he was forced to sell his cotton at a fixed price in Egypt, prices in Liverpool were rapidly rising. He added that the monopoly of purchasing cotton which the Control Commission exercised had placed the peasant under the mercy of a selected number of merchants.[55] Following his interview with Zaghlūl, Wingate reported:

> "There is no doubt that locally the general trend of events is being viewed with some alarm and my last interview with the Sultan indicated not a little nervousness on his part. There are also certain stormy elements, like Saad Zaghloul and others, who would like to exploit the new cotton arrangement in a somewhat hostile spirit - I had an interview with the latter yesterday and his main complaint was that the present arrangements had been made without proper consultation with Egyptians independent of the Government, e.g. himself and others who knew the conditions of the Fellaheen".[56]

In the course of his interview with Zaghlūl, the High Commissioner suggested to him that he should submit in a written form his observations on the political and economic situation, and advised him to see the Acting Financial Adviser, W. Brunyate for further discussions

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55. Ibid., 23 March 1918.

56. Wingate's Papers, Box 168, Wingate to Graham, 24 March 1918.

on the subject.[57] Consequently, Zaghlūl reiterated his complaints to the Adviser, and expressed his deep resentment at the deliberate exclusion of the members of the Legislative Assembly from takingpart in the functions of the Cotton Control Commission, the Capitulations Commission, and the Supplies Control Board.[58] Simultaneously, Sultan Fu'ād was busily urging his supporters to join hands against the occupation. At his request Zaghlūl and the ex-Prime Minister, Muḥammad Sa^{c}īd agreed to forget their earlier differences and work together in the service of the country and the sovereign.[59]

Towards the end of March, 1918, Fu'ād formally awarded Zaghlūl the insignia of Sultan Ḥusain Kāmil for his distinguished services to the nation. At the same time Zaghlūl learnt that the Sultan had in the last few days expressed to a large number of Egyptian notables the same views which he earlier revealed to him.[60] The Sultan continued to mount the pressure against his Ministers in the hope of achieving a greater measure of control over their decisions. Similarly he turned his attention to

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57. Zaghlūl's Memoirs, Notebook no. 28, 23 March 1918.

58. Ibid., 26 March 1918.

59. Ibid.

60. Ibid., 29 March 1918.

the discontented and long neglected elements of the Legislative Assembly, the former ministers and the members of the 'Ummah Party to win their support. In July, he offered Zaghlūl the post of Director-General of the Red Crescent Organisation, which the latter after consultation with some of his close associates from the 'Ummah Party declined to accept.[61] The High Commissioner noted that though

> "The Sultan is going fairly well, ... he listens to busybodies who have their own axes to grind, and does not seem to care much for his Ministers or consult them as freely as they would like - his officine nocturne, as it is called, consists of Emin Yehia, Ismail Sidki, Saad Zaglul, the lawyer Abdul Aziz Fehmi and one or two others and naturally the Ministers do not like it".[62]

The rift between Fu'ād and his Ministers further increased when the Prime Minister gave in to the pressure of the military authorities and sanctioned a scheme for the recruitment of a large number of Egyptians for the service in the labour and Camel Corps in preparation for Allenby's campaign in Syria. The Naval Commander-in-Chief reported that the Sultan

> "described that 'volunteers' were 'collected'

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61. Ibid., Notebook no. 31, 31 July 1918.

62. Wingate's Papers, Box 169, Wingate to Graham, 9 June 1918.

> by the local authorities, and once obtained were drafted off on a system which appeared to me to leave little to the wishes of the people concerned, and I remarked that this looked rather like the application of the old system of the Corvée. His Highness replied that it was more severe than the old Corvée, and that the Ministers received innumerable letters on the subject which they were obliged to destroy unread".[63]

Zaghlūl noted that the corrupt methods applied by the Government provoked the hostility of the whole population.[64] He wrote;

> "Egypt has never witnessed a more trying time than today. The enmity of the Government towards the people is more intense than ever. It robbed the population from some £E 3.5 millions and offered it as a free gift to the British Government. It fixed the price of cotton at the lowest possible value and hampered agricultural production by requisitioning the peasant's livestock and crops".[65]

However, despite the growing dissatisfaction of the 'Ummah Party and the Sultan with the Government and the occupation, there was no determined effort to change the situation. ᶜAbdel ᶜAzīz Fahmī recalled that at a meeting which he attended with Muḥammad Maḥmūd, Alī Shaᶜrāwī, Luṭfī al-Sayyid, and Zaghlūl in September 1918,

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63. F.O. 371/3202, Notes of an interview with the Sultan, 26 May 1918.

64. Zaghlūl's Memoirs, Notebook no. 31, 27 May 1918.

65. Ibid., Notebook no. 28, 24 May 1918.

to discuss Egypt's political future, the last said that in view of the presence of a large force of British troops in Egypt, the time was not suitable for raising the question.[66] Furthermore, from May to October, the efforts of the country were wholly concentrated on the preparation for Allenby's final push into Syria. This undoubtedly was an inopportune moment for the Sultan or any of his supporters to draw the attention of the British authorities to their demands. Moreover, it would seem that the Ministers hoped that by employing Egypt's resources in the service of Britain's war effort in the area, they would be afforded a better understanding in London after the War to reach a satisfactory settlement. Under the pressure of these circumstances, the Sultan moved to effect a reconciliation with his Ministers. The Commissioner cautiously remarked:

> "The situation as regards the Sultan and his Ministers is more peaceful than I have known it for sometime and I hope it may not be the prelude to a storm ... I expect they will open their mouths wide when the war is over".[67]

Wingate's misgivings regarding the change in the attitude of the Sultan towards his Ministers were

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66. Fahmī, p. 73.

67. Wingate's Papers, Box 169, Wingate to Graham, 25 August 1918.

justified. No sooner had the signs of the victory of the Allies became imminent than a movement emerged in Egypt advocating the complete independence of the country. By the time Allenby's army occupied Syria in 1918, Sultan Fu'ād once again discreetly took the initiative through his Ministers and Zaghlūl to put forward Egypt's demand for autonomy. Towards the middle of that month the Prime Minister after consultation with ᶜAdlī Yeghen, Zaghlūl, and Luṭfī al-Sayyid appealed to the American Consul in Cairo to champion Egypt's cause. The latter, however, advised Rushdī Pasha that Egypt should either await a declaration from Turkey relinquishing its rights in the country to the Egyptians or reach a bilateral agreement with Britain. The reply of the Consul disappointed Zaghlūl and his colleagues. Consequently, after two days of discussions with Muḥammad Maḥmūd and al-Sayyid at his countryside residence, Zaghlūl felt that in view of their inability to arrive at a satisfactory plan for achieving Egypt's independence they "ought to dismiss the whole idea".[69]

Sultan Fu'ād, on the other hand, was less pessimistic. According to Wingate he appeared during

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68. Zaghlūl's Memoirs, notebook no. 32, 25 October 1918.

69. Ibid., notebook No. 31, 14 October 1918.

that time to entertain "somewhat large aspirations and is all out for 'Home Rule'". The High Commissioner rightly anticipated "a somewhat troublous winter" ahead. He further added:

> "I also heared a rumour (but cannot vouch its accuracy) that on the conclusion of peace a delegation of Egyptians means to apply to President Wilson for his support in obtaining 'Home Rule' for Egypt".[70]

The Sultan was determined to give his Ministers sufficient encouragement to revive the programme which they had shortly after his accession to the throne in 1918 submitted to the British authorities.[71] Consequently Rushdī and ᶜAdlī in concert with Zaghlūl and his associates from among the members of the 'Ummah Party decided to press for Egypt's claim for independence. The Sultan, on the one hand, appeared eager to relieve himself from the growing influence of the British Advisers "whose interference in the details of the Government is irksome to him. This refers more especially to financial control of his Civil List". On the other hand, Zaghlūl was more concerned with the fate of the Legislative Assembly. He impressed upon the High Commissioner

> "the importance of allowing the Legislative

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70. F.O. 371/3722, Wingate to Hardinge, 19 October 1918.

71. A.M. Al-ᶜAqqād, Saᶜd Zaghlūl, Cairo, 1936, p. 193.

> Assembly to sit now that the war with Turkey was practically over - The burden of my reply to him was in the terms of the Koranic dictum - "Allah ma es Sabarin, izza Sabiru" - and I laid special emphasis on the last two words".[72]

This, however, did not discourage Zaghlūl and his associates, who undoubtedly continued to enjoy the Sultan's support and that of his Ministers, from forming a delegation (the Wafd) to meet the High Commissioner. In the meantime a movement sponsored by Prince ʿUmar Tūssūn which included among its members some elements from the Patriotic Party and some former senior Government officials, appeared in Alexandria professing its aim to be the achievement of Egypt's independence. On several occasions Prince Tūssūn contacted Zaghlūl to co-ordinate their efforts.[73] But the Sultan "was furious with Omar Toussun at his interference in political questions and he regarded the Prince ... almost as a hated rival to his throne".[74] The latter thus withdrew from the scene, while by the middle of November 1918, some of his

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72. Wingate's Papers, Box 170, Wingate to Graham, 6 November 1918.

73. Zaghlūl's Memoirs, notebook no. 32, 12 October 1918, 22 October 1918, and 11 November 1918.

74. Wingate's Papers, Box 170, Wingate to Hardinge, 24 November 1918.

followers joined the Wafd.[75]

The co-operation of the 'Ummah Party with the Sultan and his Ministers did not mark a shift in the traditional policy of the Party towards the sovereign. On his accession to the throne, Fu'ād attempted, without previous consultation with Zaghlūl or his associates, to promote his own political position. This he sought to achieve by first relieving his Ministers from the restrictions imposed upon them by the British Advisers; and secondly by making the Egyptian Government responsible directly to him and not to parliament. The Ministers realising that such a scheme would necessarily increase their control over the administration supported the Sultan. However, on their own, Fu'ād and his Ministers failed to obtain the agreement of the British authorities for their proposals. Consequently, the Sultan sought to enlist the support of the 'Ummah Party and Zaghlūl, and utilise, for his own purposes, their growing dissatisfaction with the Protectorate.

Other than a strong desire to change the existing system of Government, the 'Ummah Party had little in common with the Sultan. However, owing to the introduction of a number of repressive measures during the War,

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75. Zaghlūl's Memoirs, notebook no. 32, 15 November 1918.

the Party became increasingly aware of the advisability of aligning itself with the sovereign and his Ministers. Thus, the emergence of the Wafd, at the end of the War, was the outcome of the temporary coincidence of the political interests of the Sultan, the Ministers and the 'Ummah Party.[76] A number of immediate political factors, at the same time, further strengthened the alliance between them. Wingate noted:

> "There can be no possible doubt that the ideas of self-determination, which are now so freely discussed as an out come of the war, are affecting him [Fu'ād] and the Egyptian Nationalist Party".[77]

It was, therefore, quite natural for the Wafd to appeal to President Wilson and the American Consul in Egypt for support. Similarly the hostile reaction of the senior British officials to the Sultan's personal ambitions,[78] and the preparation by the Acting Financial Adviser, W. Brunyate, a programme of constitutional reform which

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76. For an analysis of the political relationship between Zaghlūl, Fu'ād and the Ministers see, Kedourie, 'Sa'd Zaghlūl and the British', St. Antony's Papers, No. XI, (Middle Eastern Affairs, No. 2) ed. A. Hourani, London, 1961, pp. 139-160.

77. Wingate's Papers, Box 170, Wingate to Graham, 6 November 1918.

78. Ibid.

ignored the moderate demands of Egypt for self-government[79] created a considerable suspicion among the Egyptians in Britain's intentions towards their country after the War. The Prime Minister on receiving the text of the proposed reforms rapidly submitted a counter-programme in which he described Brunyate's proposals in the following terms:

> "Protectorat ne veut point dire annexion et le projet de réformes constitutionnelles de Sir William Brunyate transforme le protectorat en une annexion pure et simple".[80]

Furthermore, the Anglo-French declaration of 7 November, 1918 regarding Syria, Mesopotamia, and other Arab countries had a profound effect on Egypt. The High Commissioner accurately predicted that the Egyptians would argue that,

> "as self-government is to be allowed to all territories liberated during the war, why should the same principle not be followed as regards Egypt, which was also liberated but placed under British protection after the war began?"[81]

Evidently, the Sultan, the Ministers, and the 'Ummah Party, while influenced by all these considerations recalled Wingate's assurance to the Prime Minister, in

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79. For the text of the programme see Wingate's Papers, Box 162.

80. For the text of Rushdī's programme see Wingate's Papers, Box 171; also the Arabic translation in Al-Ahram, 11 March 1969.

81. Wingate's Papers, Box 170, Wingate to Graham, 6 November 1918.

December 1917 that once the War was over the latter "would visit England with the Sultan and their views would then carry greater weight". Consequently, Zaghlūl, Shaᶜrāwī, and ᶜAbdel ᶜAzīz Fahmī in their capacity as members of the Legislative Assembly met the High Commissioner on 13 November 1918.

From the point of view of Zaghlūl and his associates, the major object of the interview was to prepare the ground for an Egyptian delegation to proceed to London, as soon as possible, in order to negotiate a political settlement with Britain. It would appear that at this stage the Wafd had not elaborated a specific programme. But as the Commissioner pressed his visitors for their precise views on the subject they seemed to favour the conclusion of a treaty of alliance with Britain. They expressed their devotion to England "by whose strong right arm we have been set free", and pledged "to sacrifice our men and money should she require them in future wars". In return for their loyalty to Britain, they stated:

> "we should expect to be given complete autonomy, though we should probably accept a measure of financial supervision on the part of His Majesty's Government, such as existed - in regard to the Public Debt - prior to 1882. We should also guarantee special facilities for British ships

traversing the Suez Canal".[82]

However, despite the relatively advanced views which Zaghlūl and his friends expressed before the Commissioner, and their public claim that they had been delegated by the Chamber to achieve the complete independence of Egypt, the Wafd, at least at its inception, seemed to be more inclined to accept a less ambitious programme. Luṭfī al-Sayyid revealed to Ḥusain Haykal that the initial plan of the Wafd was to send a delegation to the Peace Conference in Paris to demand the right of Egypt for self-determination. In the event of their failure, the Prime Minister and ʿAdlī Yeghen would then proceed to London and negotiate an agreement based on the system of the Protectorate. This agreement, according to al-Sayyid, would establish a constitutional Government in Egypt which would guarantee the legitimate rights of the people vis-à-vis the authority of the Sultan and the British occupation.[83] Muḥammad Farīd did not for a moment doubt that the policy of the new movement was the same as that of the 'Ummah Party. He wrote:

> "Despite the fact that the 'Ummah Party is now advocating independence, I, however, still believe that this Party would readily

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82. Ibid., Wingate to Hardinge, 14 November 1918.

83. Haykal, Mudhakkarātī ..., Vol. I, p. 82.

> abandon the idea at the first sign indicating Britain's willingness to reach a compromise on the question".[84]

The intentions of the Wafd, at that point, did not differ substantially from the traditional views of the 'Ummah Party regarding the future administration of Egypt. Though the members of the delegation, encouraged by the change of the international situation after the War, entertained wider ambitions than ever before, however, they remained basically attached to the idea of increasing their own political influence, under British tutelage, through the extension of the powers of self-governing institutions. Their alliance with the Sultan was therefore only viewed as a practical necessity to exert maximum pressure on the British occupation to modify, or better still, to abolish the Protectorate, and revert to a system of Government similar to that which existed before the War.

In a coordinated move with the Sultan and the Wafd, the Prime Minister visited the High Commissioner a few hours after the departure of Zaghlūl and his colleagues from the Residency. Rushdī Pasha showed Wingate a letter which he had submitted to the Sultan,

> "proposing that he and Adly Pasha should proceed at once to London to take part in the Peace discussion ... he remarked that,

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84. Farīd's Memoirs, Notebook no. 11, p. 304.

> in his opinion, it would be very advisable for [Zaghlul and his friends] to proceed to London and put up their case "as, in the event of their request being refused, the charge of inadequate representation of the Egyptian question could not be brought against us responsible Egyptian Ministers, as might be the case if we alone were delegated to proceed to London"".[85]

Though the High Commissioner categorically adhered to the opinion that "the presence in England of the Ministers and the unofficial delegates would be a help rather than a hinderance",[86] the Foreign Secretary, on the other hand, decided that "No useful purpose would be served by allowing Nationalist leaders to come to London and advance immoderate demands which cannot be entertained". He further added that "the proposed visit of the two Ministers would not be opportune at the present moment".[87]

To conclude then, despite the fact that the progress of the War during the years 1914 to 1918, dominated the political and economic situation in Egypt, the idea of effecting a change in the political status of the country remained alive in the minds of the

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85. Wingate's Papers, Box 170, Wingate to Hardinge, 14 November 1918.

86. Ibid., Wingate to Hardinge, 19 November 1918.

87. Ibid., Box 107, Balfour to Wingate, 27 November 1918.

successive sovereigns and the members of the 'Ummah Party. Several attempts were made throughout the period of the War, at the instigation of Sultan Ḥusain and later Fu'ād to achieve such a change, but were thwarted by the unfavourable reaction of the British authorities. However, towards the end of the War a number of immediate political and economic factors contributed to the emergence of a new political movement led by Zaghlūl and his close associates among the prominent members of the 'Ummah Party. In the initial stages of its development, the aims of this movement did not differ greatly from the traditional demands of the 'Ummah Party for self-government. But as Britain refused to move in the direction of making such a concession, new political forces entered the struggle and the nature of the methods and objectives of the movement underwent a change.

CHAPTER V

THE 1919 UPRISING AND ITS AFTERMATH

The political outlook of the Wafd as it emerged after the War owed its origins to the social and political changes which Egypt witnessed since 1907.

During the decade which followed Cromer's departure from Egypt, the fortunes of the Egyptian rural middle class and the lower sections of the class of large landowners appeared to survive the effects of the continuous process of land fragmentation. While the total area of medium-size estates rapidly declined from 39.4°/o in 1898 to 34.2°/o in 1907, the decrease was relatively smaller a decade later. In 1918, the holdings of the middle landowners formed 33.8°/o of the total cultivated land owned by the native population. The average holding of the middle peasant remained almost constant.

During the same period, the rural middle class acquired a greater measure of political influence. Already by the end of the 19th century, the great majority of *cumdas* were recruited from among the members of this class. Similarly, Kitchener's reform of the Electoral Law in 1913, introduced an increasing number of middle

landowners into the Provincial Councils.[1] Their political influence was further strengthened when during and after the War no new elections were held. As a result, the members of the Councils who were elected in 1913 and 1914 retained their position despite the expiration of their term of office.

In short, by the end of the War, the class of middle landowners exercised considerable political power in the countryside, and enjoyed a relatively stable economic position. However, the rise in the prices of the principal commodities during the War greatly influenced its attitude towards the existing system of government. Being unable to adapt themselves in the majority of cases to modest habits of consumption, the middle peasants could not make ends meet, without resorting to the banks for loans. The same situation applied to the lower sections of the class of large landowners. Zaghlūl, who owned some 170 feddans in the Beheira Province on several occasions approached the National Bank for further loans to finance the cost of the production of his cotton crop.[2] He complained that the increase in the price of cotton

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1. See Chapter III.

2. Zaghlūl's Memoirs, notebook no. 28, 19 January and 26 February 1918.

since the beginning of the War did not match the rapid rise in the cost of the daily necessities.[3] In June 1917, he estimated that his revenue for the year from the sale of his cotton crop and the rent of his land would amount to £E 2850, while his debts and spendings would reach the sum of £3300.[4] His nephews ʿAtif and Fathallah Barakāt, who owned some 200 feddans were in similar financial difficulties.[5]

In the same period, a noticeable growth in the numerical strength and functions of the urban middle classes took place. The class of Government officials increased from 29,000 in 1907 to 43,000 in 1917, an increase of almost 50°/o. Likewise members of the liberal profession grew in number and influence. Magistrates, lawyers and clerks in the Mixed and Native Courts increased from 2800 to 10,000. Those engaged in the medical profession rose from 3000 to 7000, while the teachers in Government and private schools rapidly increased from 5600 to 15,600. Furthermore, the heavy expenditure of the British forces and the rise in Egypt's exports resulted in the expansion of the services sector of the

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3. Ibid., Notebook no. 26, 6 October 1916.

4. Ibid., Notebook no. 31, 14 June 1917.

5. Ibid., Notebook no. 28, 26 February 1918.

economy and the local industries. The total number of people employed in commerce, thus increased from 161,000 to 281,000.

As long as the country was in a state of War, the urban middle classes did not pose a serious threat to the occupation or to the existing structure of society. But as the War drew to an end, the magnitude of the challenge became more obvious. The roots of the crisis lay in the fact that the existing regime was unable to accommodate the rapid rate of growth of the emerging social and economic forces, while at the same time the expansion of the administration failed to absorb the increasing number of professionals and graduates of schools and European universities. This state of affairs was exacerbated when at the end of the War, Egypt realised that in the higher posts of the administration, the number of Egyptians declined from 27.7°/o in 1905, to 23.1°/o in 1920, "while in the same category the British share of posts, has increased from 42.2°/o to 59.3°/o".[6] The number of the British officials in the Egyptian administration in 1906 was 662, in 1918 they ranged between 1600 to 1700. According to G. Young,

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6. Report of the Special Mission to Egypt, 1921, Cd. 1131, p. 30.

> "The middle-class Egyptian had received an education that fitted him solely for subordinate official employment. He now saw himself deprived of all possible promotion and of many posts that had hitherto been his".[7]

The opportunities which at one time were available to the Egyptian lawyers in the Ministry of Justice were now greatly reduced following the establishment of Martial Law. Graduates of primary and secondary schools who formed the bulk of the middle and lower echelons of the provincial and central administration were similarly disappointed. During the events of 1919, the High Commissioner received a letter signed by a "friendly adviser" describing the situation in the following terms:

> "No doubt that every farmer used to send his sons to the school hoping they will some day be appointed in the Government. When the farmers perceived that the Primary Education Certificate was cancelled and the salary of the bearers of the Secondary Education Certificate was reduced to six pounds instead of eight pounds while in the meantime thousands of English persons were appointed in the government circles with high salaries they took to these ravages you observe now".[8]

The withdrawal of the British troops from Egypt checked the growth of the services sector, and the

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7. G. Young, Egypt, London, 1927, p. 219.

8. F.O. 141/Box 810/file 8013, friendly adviser to Allenby, undated [6/4/19?].

resumption of large scale imports from abroad undermined the expansion of the local industries. Consequently retail merchants, shopkeepers, dressmakers, barbers and industrial workers were considerably affected by the new situation arising from the termination of the War. In addition to this, the rise of the wholesale price index from 100 in 1914 to 211 in 1918, and 312 in 1920 naturally caused considerable hardships among the native Government employees and the workers.[9]

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Following Cromer's departure from Egypt, a new form of political activity, which was purely an urban phenomenon, emerged. The introduction of Gorst's repressive measures against the press, the students, and the Patriotic Party led to the formation of a number of underground secret societies. These organisations were brought to the notice of the authorities late in 1910, after the assassination of the Prime Minister, Buṭros Ghālī.[10] The great majority of these societies were connected with some of the leaders of the Patriotic Party, and the bulk of their membership was drawn from among the student population. However, as the political position

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9. Issawi, p. 33.

10. F.O. 371/1114, 'Report Respecting Secret Societies', 22 June 1911.

of the Party weakened, its control over these societies declined. A number of them gradually broke up into small independent groups which carried out attempts against the lives of the Sultan, the Ministers and the British officials.[11] The General Secretary of the Wafd in 1919, ᶜAbdel Raḥmān Raḥmī did not hesitate to coordinate the activities of these groups for the purpose of intimidating his party's political opponents.[12]

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The impact of the rise of the rural and urban middle classes had a profound affect on the structure and political outlook of the nationalist movement. Cantori noted that since the founding of the Wafd in November 1918, there was

> "early evidence of two competing structures within the party: a minority who would accommodate themselves in a major fashion to Britain's continued presence in Egypt, and a majority who opposed Britain in a more uncompromising fashion".[13]

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11. For an interesting and informative account on the development of secret societies in Egypt see the complete text of the confessions of Shafiq Manṣur, who was an active member in a number of groups since 1906 until his execution in 1925, following the assasination of the Sirdar. F.O. 371/10899, Henderson to Chamberlain, 6 July 1925.

12. A.A. Rifāᶜī, Thawrat Miṣr Sanat 1919, Cairo, 1966, pp. 144-148.

13. Cantori, p. 18.

The former tendency represented the familiar policy of the 'Ummah Party which advocated autonomy under British tutelage, while the latter led by Zaghlūl favoured the withdrawal of Britain from Egypt.

The gradual change in Zaghlūl's position came about as a result of his earlier experience with the British authorities and the sovereign, and the growing support which the Egyptian middle and lower classes afforded the Wafd. After his resignation from the Government in 1912, Zaghlūl became increasingly aware of the importance of his reliance on the electorate to restore some of his political prestige and influence. He felt that the only course open to him for realising his hopes was in taking the side of the people (al-Nās), and not in submitting to the wishes of the Khedive or Kitchener.[14] In 1913, despite the hostility of both these authorities, Zaghlūl won the elections for the Legislative Assembly in two Cairo constituencies, and thus his confidence in the power of the electorate was further strengthened. Consequently, he made a personal vow, which was not intended for publication, not to allow himself, as the elected Vice-President of the Assembly, to be deceived by the friendly approaches of the Khedive

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14. Zaghlūl's Memoirs, Notebook no. 23, 19 November 1913.

or Kitchener, "but to bend only to the interests of my countrymen to whom I owe my present honourable position".[15]

Though during the War Zaghlūl did not strictly adhere to his vow, however, his early awareness of the growing political influence of the self-governing institution and the body of voters prepared him better than any of his colleagues to play a leading role in the development of the nationalist movement after the War.

The enthusiastic and impressive support which the Egyptian middle and lower classes lent to the Wafd, at the end of the War, further confirmed Zaghlūl's confidence in the nation. He significantly observed that

> "the majority of those who visited us from among the upper and educated classes of the society put forward questions which clearly indicated their bad faith and lack of confidence in the Wafd. None of them offered any material or moral assistance ... On the other hand, many of the people belonging to the other classes volunteered their services without demanding a compensation or a salary. They afforded us considerable sympathy and encouragement in their speeches and prayers".[16]

Undoubtedly the movement to secure a mandate from the nation in the form of signed statements delegating full powers to the Wafd for achieving Egypt's absolute independence was alien to the aristocratic tendencies of

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15. Ibid., Notebook no. 22, 26 December 1913.

16. Ibid., Notebook 32, 15 November 1918.

its founding members. In itself, this step was an indication of the growing involvement of wider sections of the Egyptian population in the movement for political independence. By virtue of his personal experience in the art of political survival and his responsiveness to the aspirations of the nation, Zaghlūl did not fail to identify himself with the emerging middle and lower classes. In a speech to the workers, he expressed his enormous joy at the fact that the movement had spread to include the poorer classes. He said that had it been confined to the upper classes, the national aim of the Wafd would have never been achieved. He addressed his audience in the following terms: "Your envious enemies have called you 'the class of the mob' I take pride in being a member of the mob".[17] Zaghlūl carefully observed the mood of the nation before taking a decision of major political importance. Before starting his negotiations with Lord Milner in 1920, he instructed the Secretary of the Central Committee of the Wafd to prepare public opinion in Egypt for such an eventuality.[18] Though the majority of the Wafd's negotiating team in London endorsed

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17. Fahmī's Memoirs, file 27, p. 2819.

18. Ibid., file 10, Zaghlūl to Fahmī, 18 April 1920, p. 954.

Milner's proposals, Zaghlūl however, eager not to alienate the bulk of his supporters in Egypt, insisted that the nation should first be consulted before the final word was pronounced. ʿAdlī Yeghen, on that occasion, informed Milner's emissary in Paris that what prevented him from concluding an agreement with Britain

> "is only one jarring note and that is the attitude of Zaghlul Pasha, who is getting more difficult to manage every day but who is not negligible unfortunately and who is going to be troublesome".[19]

In his political campaign against the Liberal Constitutionalists in later years, Zaghlūl refuted the old theme of the 'Ummah Party which envisaged the commercial and financial independence of Egypt as a pre-requisite for genuine political freedom. On 7 October 1923, he informed a meeting of Egyptian merchants in Cairo that in the absence of political independence, Egypt would simply never achieve its economic liberty. He felt that the persistent emphasis of his opponents on the priority of economic and financial matters revealed a deliberate effort on their part to divert the attention of the nation from advocating the political independence of their country. He said,

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19. F.O. 848/20, O. Walrond to Milner, 9 October 1920.

> "It is necessary to economise and study the financial situation, but our duty lies first and foremost in the achievement of political independence. Otherwise, what good is it to us to promote our economic interests without independence.
>
> Why did our experiment in the establishment of the ginning factories fail?
>
> It failed because heavy taxes were imposed.
>
> It failed because we were not in possession of our political freedom. Had it not been that we were under the rule of the foreigner we would have built a thousand and one industry.
>
> It is, therefore, essential that if we exert in industry and commerce one carat of our effort, we should spend the remaining twenty three carats in the pursuit of our political independence".[20]

Whether Egypt could have industralised if it had not been occupied by Britain is a matter for speculation, however, the important thing for our purpose is to note that Zaghlūl's emphasis on the principle of direct political involvement rather than the evolutionary approach to the achievement of independence represented a major aspect of the rupture between the selective movement of the 'Ummah Party and the more popular appeal of the Wafd. It would appear that by the end of the War, the struggle for independence was no more confined to the activities of a limited number of Egyptian notables and large

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20. Fahmī's Memoirs, files 3-4.

landowners. The Wafd embodied the hopes and aspirations of the rising middle classes, the lawyers, the doctors, the merchants and the class of Government officials.

As events unfolded during the period 1919 to 1921, the coexistence of these two incompatible trends in the Wafd became increasingly intolerable. However, the movement passed through three interrelated phases before it finally lost its elements of cohesion and consequently the compromising faction broke away. March 1919 witnessed the outbreak of political disturbances in the provinces and the urban centres. In April, the Central Committee of the Wafd and a number of voluntary organisations affiliated to it were formed, which in effect consolidated the predominant position of the middle classes in the movement. Finally by making concessions to the moderate section of the Wafd, Britain managed to undermine the principle of national unity which the Wafd at the time of its formation represented.

During the War signs of discontent were brewing among the poorer classes in the countryside and the towns. Already the small landowning peasant was suffering from the effects of fragmentation of land. His average land-holding further declined from 1.17 feddans in 1907 to 0.94 feddan in 1918. A large number of those peasants who in 1907 cultivated land on lease, appeared by 1917

to have lost their land and become mere agricultural labourers. To make ends meet, the families of the landless and small peasants were employed on the large estates. While in 1907, only 14,000 females were registered as agricultural workers and farm servants, by 1917 they had increased to 1,330,000.[21] The scarcity of land and the rapid growth of the population in the countryside caused the movement of a great number of poor peasants to the towns seeking employment. The process of urbanisation was given impetus by the presence of large bodies of British troops in the towns. In Middle Egypt, where the percentage of landless peasants was the highest in the country,[22] there was a slower rate of increase in the population of the towns than a decade earlier. The small farmers and agricultural labourers of this part of Egypt appeared to drift in the direction of the Delta and the southern provinces in search for better opportunities of work. However, the population of the mercantile and provincial centres in lower and Upper Egypt showed a substantial rate of increase which exceeded that for the

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21. Ministry of Finance, The Census of Egypt Taken in 1917, p. 380.

22. F.O. 848/19, Sir Thomas Owen, a member of the Milner Mission responsible for inquiring into the economic and agricultural situation in Egypt, estimated that 53°/o, 40°/o and 36°/o of the total number of families in Middle, Upper and Lower Egypt respectively did not possess land.

whole population of the country. But at the end of the War, the demobilisation of the army and the resumption of large scale imports left the majority of these uprooted peasants without their means of subsistence. Consequently, they supported the struggle for independence and joined the newly formed labour unions during the industrial unrest which broke out in 1919.

In the meantime, the condition of the mass of small peasants who remained on the land continued to deteriorate. This was accurately described in the report on the "Agricultural and Economic Position of Egypt" prepared by the Milner Mission.[23] It stated that the demand for war material brought about the substitution of cotton for cereals with the obvious result of a sharp rise in the cost of foodstuffs, especially bread which formed 82°/o of the total energy of the whole diet of the poorer classes. There was also a shortage in cattle on which the peasant relied to plough the land, and which he generally offered as a form of security against the plot of land he rented from the large proprietors. While in 1903, the ratio of persons per head of cattle was 7 : 1, in 1919 it increased to 12 : 1. One of the most potent sources of the small peasants' misery was the system under

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23. Ibid.

which they hired the land. The Mission "failed to obtain copies of private leases or agreements between landlords and tenants. It does not seem to be the custom for tenants to have copies of the agreements". The conditions under which land was leased was not based on any established law. Exorbitant rents were the rule in Egypt and not the exception. Whenever the crop failed the tenant suffered the consequences. And when the peasant's financial difficulties mounted, his creditor forced him to accept the lowest value for his produce. On the other hand, the Government made no effort to establish or support the agricultural credit banks and left the matter in the hands of the money-lender or the private enterprises. The report of the Mission noted that,

> "judging from the balance sheets of one of the Egyptian Agricultural Banks the profit made from its dealings with the fellaheen is beyond all reason. The policy of the Bank was the 'Pound of flesh' as in 1916 when the fellah could not sell his cotton, the Bank pressed him to such an extent that the Government had to arrange a kind of 'pawn shop' where the fellah could pledge his family's jewellery in order to meet the Bank's demands for instalments".

The report, with a view to satisfying the peasants' hunger for land, recommended the compulsory acquisition of land from the large landowners for the purpose of distributing it among the landless.

To add to the peasant's plight and misfortune,

the military authorities, during the War, pressed for the recruitment of an increasing number of Egyptians in the Labour and Camel Corps. At the request of General Allenby all Governmental and private schemes requiring unskilled labour were discontinued.[24] Early in May 1918, the British military and civil authorities decided that

> "labour should be requisitioned from the villages on a sort of corvée system. This should be done through the Mudirs, Mammours and Omdas".[25]

In compliance with this decision, the Prime Minister instructed the Governors of the provinces to use all their moral influence to ensure the success of the campaign. He added that he had observed "that some Mamurs and Omdehs are showing some neglect", and warned:

> 'In the future I will deal myself with those of whose neglect the Military authorities complain and will reward all those who will do their work in a satisfactory manner".[26]

The local authorities in the majority of cases proceeded to implement the instructions of the Prime

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24. F.O. 141/Box 797/file 2689, report on "The Limitation of Government and Private Works likely to interfere with Recruiting Egyptian Labour", prepared by a British committee with delegates from the army and the Egyptian Service, 24 December 1917.

25. Ibid., report on a meeting of British officials attended by Allenby and Wingate, 5 May 1918.

26. Ibid., Enclosed in Haines to K. Boyd, 8 May 1918.

Minister by the use of force. Peasants were dragged unwillingly away from their homes, families, and fields. A recruiting officer vividly described the typical method of obtaining men as it was acted by a group of recruits in one of the camps. He wrote:

> "They procured an empty biscuit box and installed one of their numbers to represent my clerk. On either side of him were two gentlemen from Mit Amil representing the Mamoor Markaz and the Doctor and in front of the box strutting up and down was a particularly dirty ruffian representing my unworthy self ... One of the men would then be brought up with a great show of reluctance whereupon an official would shout out in a tremendous voice 'Iktem' (sign), he would then be forced to sign and pushed over to the other side amidst howls of delight from the others".[27]

Though in themselves these mounting grievances did not endow the Egyptian peasant with a definite political outlook, they nonetheless shaped his attitude towards the state, the British and the landlords. As the news of the disturbances in the urban centres and more particularly Cairo reached him early in March 1919, and as the class of government officials in the provinces took an active part in support of the Wafd, thus causing a temporary breakdown in the system of public security throughout the country, the peasant identified his

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27. Ibid., A.H. Curtis to Colonel Hazel, 1 June 1918.

immediate oppressors and acted accordingly. Devoid of any conscious political planning, the uprising of the peasants in Egypt took the form of spontaneous attacks against the British occupation, the local authorities and the wealthier classes.

As early as 1916, signs of disobedience among the men enlisted in the Labour and Camel Corps were observed. On 29 January 1916, 400 recruits marched to ʿAbdīn Square to put before the Sultan their grienvances. They complained of the insufficient pay, the bad rations they received, and ill treatment from British N.C.O's. Before they were marched back to their barracks by the British troops, the mounted police had already wounded twenty of them.[28] During a visit to one of the camps in Assiut, a British officer observed that the officer in charge

> "found it necessary to surround the camp with barbed wire. In a recent case in which 200 men were taken by somewhat irregular methods at Beni Suef the whole of the 200 with one exception deserted before reaching Cairo".[29]

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28. F.O. 800/48, McMahon to Grey, 2 February 1916; Wingate's Papers, Box 159, Assistant Adjutant General in Cairo to Adjutant General in Khartoum, 29 January 1916.

29. F.O. 141/Box 797/file 2689, Report on the progress of the recruitment campaign submitted to the High Commissioner, 27 May 1917.

British officials who were in close contact with native opinion in the countryside sounded notes of warning. W. Willcocks of the Department of Irrigation wrote: "Something should be done to get back the goodwill of the fellah, without which our rule here is founded on sand."[30] During the second half of 1918 numerous reports were received from the provinces describing attacks made by the villagers against the local authorities and the British troops. One such typical report from the governor of the Qena province read as follows:

> "The village Sheikh, [of] Armant, proceeded, with the Sheikh-Ghafar and a number of Ghafirs, to collect recruits, for the Military Authorities, when one of the villagers offered resistance, firing a shot at the Sheikh Ghafar, who was also beaten with sticks, until he expired; the village Sheikh was similarly assaulted, with blows, by sticks, so much so that he succumbed to his injuries.
>
> Seeing this, the Ghafirs fired a number of shots, killing 3 villagers and wounding 3 others ..."[31]

The deportation of Zaghlūl and his colleagues, on 8 March, in the first instance provoked a large scale movement of student unrest and strikes among the lawyers, tramworkers, and government employees in Cairo and

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30. Wingate's Papers, Box 237, W. Willcocks, 'Memorandum giving the opinion of a very friendly and reliable Egyptian', 4 March 1919.

31 F.O. 141/Box 797/file 2689. Mudīr of Qena to Ministry of Interior, 20 May 1918.

Alexandria. This was immediately followed by similar demonstrations in the provincial towns. On 12 March, the Acting Commissioner reported that troubles broke out in Tanta,[32] and a few days later he wrote, "All communications with Upper Egypt are interrupted for present".[33] The next day the disturbances spread to Zaqaziq, Mansura and Beni Suef. The railway and telegraphic communications in the Delta were cut and the "Military effort is confined for the moment to restoring Alexandria - Cairo line which has again been cut".[34] Cheetham, alarmed at the rapid deterioration of the situation, advised the Foreign Secretary to grant the Egyptian delegates permission to leave the country for the purpose of advocating their national aspirations. He wrote:

> "It should be realised that we are now in a totally different situation from that of moment when your original instructions were given not to relax restrictions in case of Nationalist Leaders.
>
> No one in Egypt at that time could have believed that actual insurrectionary outburst was possible.
>
> Its sudden appearance and rapid growth is astonishing to the oldest observers ... British officials incline to the belief that

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32. F.O. 371/3714, Cheetham to F.O. 12 March 1919.

33. Ibid., Cheetham to F.O. 15 March 1919.

34. Ibid., Cheetham to F.O. 16 March 1919.

> whatever Nationalist instigation there may have been in last few months the feeling now exhibited must have been growing during several years, and that an explosion at some time was inevitable".

On the same day, he reported:

> "Provinces of Behera, Gharbia, Menufia and Dakehlia are in a state of open revolt ... generally speaking Civil Government in the country districts of the Delta Provinces is non-existent except when practically maintained by Military ... Turkish flag is flown in some villages".[35]

On 18 March, the train from Luxor to Cairo was attacked at Deirut. In the incident three British officers and 5 soldiers were killed.[36] Reinforcements sent to the aid of a small garrison of British troops in Assiūt was twice attacked on the way. In the event a senior British officer, who took a prominent part in the recruitment campaign during the War was shot and died three days later.[37] By July 1919, the British military casualties numbered 29 killed and 114 wounded.[38]

Simultaneously, the peasants attacked the provincial authorities, the police stations, and the government offices in the districts, which they naturally

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35. Ibid., 19 March 1919.

36. Al-Rāfiʿī, Thawrat 1919, p. 171.

37. Ibid.

38. F.O. 371/3718, Allenby to F.O., 21 July 1919.

associated with the repressive measures inflicted upon them during the War. In Assiut, Minia al-Qamh and Menuf, the insurrectionists ransacked the police headquarters and took possession of the arms and ammunition. At Qalyub, the demonstrators burned the railway station and damaged the agricultural road. Attempting to interfere with the rebels, the governor of the Beheira province was beaten with sticks and later taken to the hospital. The government officials in the provinces "if not terrorised have no influence and we are not for moment in contact with them. Sultan is isolated in his palace and has no authority".[39] Cheetham reported that on March 14, the insurgents released the recruits in the Menuf Markaz and set the government house on fire. He added that "Zifta fell into hands of the mob, after demonstrations in which Europeans are said to have taken part, and in the course of which the ex-Khedive's photograph was hoisted in the Markaz. ... In the Fayoum began attacks by Bedouin bands upon communication and Government buildings".[40] However, in the majority of cases where government officials were unable to muster enough forces to repel the attacks, they

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39. F.O. 371/3714, Cheetham to F.O., 20 March 1919.

40. Al-Ahram, 21 March 1969, Cheetham to Curzon, 25 March 1919.

either joined the rebels or idly stood by allowing events to take their own course.

By the middle of March 1919, the troubles in the countryside acquired a new dimension. The large landowner, the foreign money-lenders, and in some cases the Coptic shopkeepers and jewellers became the targets of the deprived and exploited peasants. On receiving some information from the provinces after the partial repair of the telegraphic lines, the Acting Commissioner hopefully wrote "In certain districts movement has character of a peasant rising against landlords, which is perhaps an indication that organised motive has spent its force".[41] The British authorities appeared to encourage this new tendency which undermined the position of the upper classes and deflected the hostility of the peasants from themselves. According to a British Inspector, the reason for the change in the attitude of the peasants towards the landlords was partly due to

> "The British propaganda last year which was mainly directed at the Effendi class and the fellahin. Nearly all the pamphlets issued were in the line that the Effendi class had exploited the fellahin and had allowed them to suffer most".[42]

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41. F.O. 371/3714, Cheetham to F.O., 23 March 1919.

42. F.O. 141/Box 514, R.S. Stafford to the Acting Adviser of Interior, Monteith-Smith, 23 October 1920.

The investigations made by the Milner Mission on the situation of the peasants further indicated that,

> "The March riots revealed to the large owners how strong a feeling existed among the fellaheen against their rapacity and suggested that the threats of violence then made might very easily be translated into bloodshed and danger to themselves. It is reported that some estates were actually captured and divided during the riots, but on the retention of order were returned to the owners, but the attitude of the fellaheen during these riots indicated clearly reforms much overdue, if permanent content is to be established throughout the country".[43]

The Acting Commissioner described the movement as being not only anti-Sultanian and anti-foreign, but also "has Bolshevist tendency, aims at destruction of property as well as communications".[44] A nationalist lawyer in Assiut and an eyewitness observed that,

> "The prominent families in Assiut locked their doors and installed their own guardsmen to protect them from the rebellious masses. It was a revolution against the British, and a revolution against wealth. The former was the revolution of the enlightened against Britain. The latter was the revolution of the evil poor against the rich".

In an attempt to prevent a group of peasants determined to set on fire a building belonging to Mahmūd Pasha Sulaimān, leader of the 'Ummah Party, the young lawyer

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43. F.O. 848/19, Report of the Milner Mission on the "Agricultural and Economic Position of Egypt".

44. F.O. 371/3714, Cheetham to F.O. 19 March 1919.

reminded the crowd that the Pasha's son, Muḥammad Mahmūd was deported with Zaghlūl. This hardly made any impression on the crowd, "One of the monsters retorted: Has Mahmud Pasha Suluman ever distributed bread among the hungry? It is food that we seek". In another part of the town, where the jewellery shops were looted, the Coptic merchants were the main victims of the deprived crowds. The government employees left their posts and sought refuge in the security of the private homes of the notables and foreign Consuls.[45] In Balbis the villagers burned part of the estate of Ibrāhīm Pasha Murād, one of the founders of the Jarīdah Company and a leading member of the 'Ummah Party.[46]

However, towards the end of March, the arrival of British reinforcements and the appointment of Lord Allenby as Special High Commissioner to Egypt with extraordinary powers enabled the military authorities gradually to gain control over the country. Firm and in many cases rather excessive measures were adopted to suppress the peasants. Although, for example, the inhabitants of the two villages of Azizia and Berdashin did not offer any resistence to the troops, the British officers in charge found it

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45. F. Abaẓa, al Ḍāhik al-Bākī, Cairo, 1933, pp. 58-73.

46. Al-Ahram, 4 April 1969.

> "necessary to burn houses as a measure of coercion or punishment. This accordingly was done in each of the four hamlets composing Azizia, and the native villages being very inflammable the fires once started spread rapidly, and a considerable number of houses were burnt".[47]

In the meantime, the propertied classes in the towns and the countryside, who in the first instance were caught unprepared for the event, and who were extremely alarmed at the growing threat which the movement posed to private property and the machinery of the state counselled calm and obedience to law and order. In some districts, the notables, the lawyers and the native Government officials who were sympathetic to the Wafd's aims took control over the movement and formed local committees to protect the foreign residents and organise the administration.[48] In Zifta a nationalist notable with the tacit agreement of the Ma'mūr, presided over a revolutionary committee which took upon itself the administration of the affairs of the district, in the absence of the authority of the central Government.[49]

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47. F.O. 371/3719, Allenby to Curzon, 25 August 1919.

48. Al-Ahram, 18 March 1969.

49. Al-Rāfiʿī, Thawrat 1919, p. 162. In recent years some Egyptian writers have asserted that during the uprising, Zifta was declared a republic, see for example; A. Abdel-Malek, Égypte Société Militaire,

F/note contd. on next page

Describing his own disappointment at the turn of events in Assiut, the young nationalist lawyer wrote:

> "It was a shock for the young patriot. The revolution was a bewildering mixture between the advocates of independence and those who demanded food. It was indeed a strange mixture between national struggle and naive socialism".[50]

Cheetham when first noting that the peasants were beginning to attack private property remarked: "Fear of this is driving decent Egyptians to try and arrive at some understanding with extremists so as to modify their attitude and force them to approve of formation of a Ministry".[51] A few days later, he reported that a group of Egyptian notables including a number of wealthy landowners approached the Residency indirectly with the view to obtain permission for the Egyptian delegation to proceed to England.[52] Consequently, on 24 March, the members of the Wafd in Egypt, all the ex-Ministers, the leading Muslim and Coptic dignatories, the President and members

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Footnote 49 contd. from previous page.

> Paris, 1962, p. 28; also A.B. Al-Dīn, Ayyām Laha Tārikh, Cairo, 1954. However, the evidence in al-Rafi'i, a contemporary of the 1919 events does not bear out this point.

50 Abaza, p. 63.

51 F.O. 371/3714, Cheetham to F.O., 16 March 1919.

52. Ibid., Cheetham to F.O., 22 March 1919.

of the Legislative Assembly, and senior Government officials addressed an appeal to the Egyptian nation. The appeal significantly implored the nation to refrain from the attacks on the life and property of the innocent. It further stated that

> "such attacks are prohibited by the rules of God and the laws of man. The disruption of the communications has been clearly detrimental to the interests of the people. It interrupted the transport of their produce, and brought trade to a standstill. Furthermore, it exposed many villages to punishment and destruction ... and alienated those who might otherwise sympathise with Egypt.
>
> We appeal to the Egyptian nation in the name of its most sacred national duty to keep within the bounds of law. And we appeal to the notables and men of influence throughout the country to prevent the recurrence of these harmful incidents".[53]

The uprising in the countryside thus gradually came to an end by the suppressive measures of the military authorities and the efforts of the moderate as well as the radical sections of the Wafd. Though the large majority of Egyptian professionals and Government employees strongly opposed the occupation, they were, however, equally averse to the destruction of the machinery of the State which they hoped to control. The small merchants in the towns and the rural middle classes were

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53. Al-Fāfiʿī, Thawrat 1919, pp. 183-184.

more inclined to accept the peaceful and lawful means for achieving independence than suffer the consequences of a social upheaval. In the meantime, the confusing situation which prevailed in the ranks of the supporters of the Wafd, during the uprising, soon gave way to a more organised and institutionalised form of resistance to the occupation.

The early events of the rising in the urban centres appeared to lack coordination or organisation. The spontoneous demonstrations of the students in Cairo occured despite the objections of some members of the Wafd.[54] The Acting High Commissioner reported that "There is some evidence that Nationalist Leaders were opposed to this outbreak".[55] However, the movement continued to gain momentum and a measure of organised effort in certain cases slowly emerged. The Acting Commissioner wrote: "The most disquieting feature is a strike of advocates, a concerted movement which has now prevented all the native courts of first instance in provinces from sitting". At the same time, he noted that there was an effort to disrupt the work of the adminis-

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54. Al-ʿAqqād, p. 229.

55. F.O. 371/3714, Cheetham to F.O., 10 March 1919.

tration.[56] By mid-March, the strike of the Native Bar became general, and the workers in the railway repair shops abandoned their work.[57] Cheetham described the movement in the following terms.

> "I should make it clear that present movement in Egypt is national in the full sense of the word. It has now apparently the sympathy of all classes and creeds, including the Copts".[58]

Though the appeal of the Egyptian notables had a general calming effect on the population, sporadic disturbances continued. In April, the newly formed Strike Committee representing the Government employees called for a strike until Zaghlūl and his colleagues were recognised as the official representatives of Egypt in the Peace Conference.[59] An Intelligence report revealed that until the beginning of April, Cairo was quiet, but then demonstrations recurred and the Egyptian

> "Military and Police Cadets left Military School in a body and demonstrated before Sultan's Palace. On April 3, 70 men of the Egyptian Army refused duty and left the barracks with their arms but returned later ... on 5th and 6th in Old Cairo trenches were dug and barricades erected

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56. Ibid., Cheetham to F.O. 11 March 1919.

57. Ibid., Cheetham to F.O., 15 March 1919.

58. Ibid., Cheetham to F.O., 17 March 1919.

59. Al-Rāfiᶜī, Fi 'Aᶜqāb al-Thawrah, Cairo, 1946, p. 13.

by natives".[60]

The radical elements in the Wafd, and notably ᶜAbdel Raḥmān Fahmī, the General Secretary of the Central Committee which was formed on 12 April, did not fail to appreciate the vital importance of the initiative of the students, the lawyers, the doctors, and Government officials in the struggle for independence. A number of committees under the direct supervision of ᶜAbdel Raḥmān Fahmī, who at that time enjoyed Zaghlūl's personal confidence were organised to coordinate the activities of the different sections of the movement. Together with his nephew, Aḥmad Māher and Maḥmūd al-Nuqrāshī, Fahmī was able to exercise a predominant influence over the existing secret societies.[61] Similarly by the end of 1919, the Wafd had consolidated its position in the countryside by winning the allegiance of the majority of ᶜumdas, and the Provincial Councillors. In fact, this wide range of semi-official institutions and voluntary organisations, formed the basis of the Wafd's social and political power in the rural and urban areas for years to come. They were instrumental during the campaign which

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60. F.O. 371/3715, General Headquarters, Egypt to War Office, 9 April 1919.

61. F.O. 371/10899, The Confessions of Shafīq Manṣūr, 18 June 1925, enclosed in Henderson to Chamberlain, 6 July 1925.

the Wafd successfully launched against the Milner Mission, and prevented a number of Ministers from taking office under the Protectorate. Senior British officials giving evidence before the Mission admitted that the Cumdas, and the provincial councillors had fallen under the influence of the Wafd. The Adviser of Interior reported that

> "Every Provincial Council has registered a protest in favour of boycotting the Milner Commission. As regards the cotton tax, only four have so far made a protest, but doubtless other protests will be made. The irrigation projects ... have only been dealt with by those Councils which have held their meetings since the middle of February, other Councils will probably follow the lead..."[62]

These protests were made in response to the policies of the Wafd. A circular distributed in the provinces and signed by a secret society affiliated to the Wafd blamed Britain for the fall in the prices of cotton. It attacked the Minister of Public Works for his proposal to build a barrage in the Sudan, which the circular claimed would prevent the flow of the waters of the Nile to Egypt. It incited the peasant to demand his rights and the independence of his country,

> "as Independence means your happiness and that of your children. Unite with your

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62. F.O. 848/11, Clayton to Residency, 29 February 1920.

> brethren in the eternal struggle against Lord Milner's Band. May God blsss Union. Down with Milner's Band. Down with the Treacherous Ministry".[63]

Investigations also showed that, until March 1919, the British authorities had been able to secure the appointment of <u>umdas</u> of their own choice, but since then, "This is ... no longer the case as the Nationalist Caucus has got hold of the members of the Omdeh Commission, who are now considerably involved in the political movement".[64]

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The political aspect of Britain's reaction to the events in Egypt widened the gulf between the compromising and radical factions in the <u>Wafd</u>. The Sultan under pressure from the High Commissioner and at the same time concerned about the growing popularity of Zaghlūl, withdrew the support which he had initially afforded the movement. On the other hand, the refusal of the British Government to receive the nationalist deputation in London and the subsequent arrest and deportation of Zaghlūl and his colleagues, in the first instance, did not only precipitate a ministerial crisis and a rebellion,

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63. F.O. 848/12, Circular entitled "Life or Death", 9 January 1920.

64. F.O. 848/19, Draft Memorandum on the Ministry of Interior, prepared for the use of the Milner Mission.

but also preserved temporarily the unity of the Wafd. However, on his arrival in Egypt on 25 March 1919, Allenby realised that the movement was not a passing phase, but had come to stay, and, therefore, it was necessary to reach a settlement regarding Egypt's status under the Protectorate. He informed the Foreign Office that though he succeeded by the force of arms to suppress the most outward disorders in Egypt the "causes of unrest and ill feeling are still strong as ever, and I can see no prospect of improvement under present conditions".[65] He repeatedly urged, after consultation with Rushdī and ᶜAdlī, for the removal of the restrictions imposed upon the Egyptians to travel abroad, and explained:

> "This concession without conferring any official recognition generally from me, would automatically restore tranquility and guarantee formation of a Ministry. Fruitful discussions with His Majesty's Government would then be possible".[66]

While promising him the "fullest support" for his policy, the Foreign Office asked Allenby to consider an alternative suggestion, that of sending a Commission,

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65. F.O. 371/3714, Allenby to F.O., 4 April 1919.

66. Ibid., Allenby to F.O. 31 March 1919. On Allenby's policy, in Egypt, see E. Kedourie, 'The Genesis of the Egyptian Constitution of 1923', (ed.) Holt, Political and Social ..., pp. 347-361.

headed by Lord Milner to report on the future form of the Protectorate.[67] He accepted the proposal but added that "such a Commission will be desirable later but would be useless now" and decided to lift the embargo on travel and ordered the release of Zaghlūl and his colleagues.[68] Consequently, Ḥusain Rushdī agreed to form a Government, but resigned less than two weeks later as a result of the continued strike of the Government officials, and the endorsement of the Protectorate by the United States. Allenby thus resorted to the formation of a new Ministry under the premiership of Muḥammad Sa^{c}īd, who gave his "assurances as to his recognition of British Protectorate over Egypt".[69]

Simultaneously, the Commissioner proceeded to implement a number of measures designed to take the heat out of the movement. He "put an end to Military Courts set up to try offenders connected with recent disorders", and decided to release some of those who were interned on political grounds.[70] The press censorship was removed, but the newspapers remained "subject to certain penalties

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67. F.O. 371/3714, F.O. to Allenby, 5 April 1919.
68. Ibid., Allenby to F.O., 6 April 1919.
69. F.O. 371/3717, Allenby to F.O., 21 May 1919.
70. F.O. 371/3718, Allenby to F.O., 9 July 1919.

if license grossly abused".[71] In September 1919, the Acting Commissioner decided to increase the salaries of all grades of Government employees to meet the rising cost of living.[72] Less than a year later, the Egyptian Government with the concurrence of the British authorities

> "taking into consideration the urgency of the case of many senior officials, for whom the previous increase has been found to provide quite inadequate relief, has decided to grant a provisional increase of 10% on Government salaries".[73]

Similarly, the High Commissioner turned his attention to the grievances of the small peasants who were suffering from the exorbitant rents they paid to the landlords and the continued fall in the prices of cotton. Allenby felt that the consequence of such a situation would ultimately lead to the renewal of agrarian disturbances.[74] An Agricultural Rents Commission was thus organised in each province for the purpose of fixing the rentals for the agricultural year 1920-1921. By the end of 1921, the majority of cases brought before these Commissions were duly resolved. According to official

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71. F.O. 371/3727, Allenby to F.O., 4 July 1919.

72. F.O. 371/3719, Cheetham to F.O., 16 September 1919.

73. F.O. 371/4993, E. Scott to Curzon, 7 July 1920.

74. F.O. 371/4992, Allenby to Curzon, 24 November 1920.

reports, "The average reduction of rent granted has been fairly uniform in the different districts and has varied from 40°/o to 60°/o". The biggest reductions were made in the Minia Province where in some cases reductions were as high as 75°/o.[75]

On 18 August, 1919, the Labour Conciliation Board was formed to deal with the problems arising from industrial disputes It dealt with matters concerning the conditions of work and mainly the demands of the workers for wage increases.[76]

Though these measures reduced to a considerable extent the existing level of political tension in the country, the basic issue of conflict between the occupation and even the moderates in the Wafd was not resolved. Without a substantial modification in the form of the Protectorate, Allenby failed to achieve political stability. Between April 1919, and the end of 1921, five successive Governments were formed, but each, with the exception of Nessim's Government which enjoyed the Wafd's temporary support and thus remained in office for nearly a period

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75. F.O. 371/7763, R.V. Wild, Director General of Direct Taxes Department to the Egyptian Undersecretary of State for Finance, 16 January 1922.

76. F.O. 371/5030, President of the Labour Conciliation Board to the Prime Minister, 22 March 1920.

of 10 months, did not survive more than a few months and in certain cases only a few days. However, during the same time, the British authorities concentrated their efforts on weaning away the more moderate elements in the Wafd from Zaghlūl's influence. In this process, ʿAdlī Yeghen, who advocated the modification of the Protectorate on lines similar to those of the 'Ummah Party, played an instrumental role in bringing about a final split in the Wafd.

The recognition of the Protectorate by the United States and the Other Powers plunged the members of the Wafd in a state of depression. In their first letter to the central committee in Cairo they stated: "since our arrival the doors have been closed to us and our efforts have failed. Germany endorsed the Protectorate."[77] On 24 July 1919, the Wafd expelled two of its members for their disagreement to publish a report on the atrocities committed by the British troops against the inhabitants of a number of Egyptian villages. The two members appeared to favour a more conciliatory approach towards the occupation.[78] By the end of the year, Zaghlūl

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77. Fahmī's Memoirs, file no. 4, Wafd to Central Committee, 13 May 1919, p. 398.

78. Ibid., file no. 5, p. 543.

realised that the Wafd's reliance on the Powers to support Egypt's claim for independence had failed. He felt that the situation was further aggravated by the growing disunity among the members of the Wafd in Paris. He wrote:

> "Apart from our failure to win the support of the Powers, we are divided among ourselves ... God has never created an organisation with so much disunity among its members as that of the Wafd".[79]

Following the arrival of the Milner Mission in Egypt on 7 December 1919, Luṭfī al-Sayyid and ᶜAbdel ᶜAzīz Fahmī expressed their desire to return to Cairo for negotiations. Zaghlūl, however, strongly objected to the idea, and a heated discussion ensued.[80] Zaghlūl was also subjected to pressure from ᶜAdlī Yeghen who was in close contact with Lord Milner in Cairo. However, ᶜAdlī's efforts and those of the Mission to lure Zaghlūl into returning to Egypt were unsuccessful. He felt that his return would only solve the British dilemma created by the effective campaign in Egypt against the Mission and expose the disunity existing in the ranks of the Wafd. Furthermore, he believed that his insistence on his demands would

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79. Zaghlūl's Memoirs, Notebook no. 35, 18 December 1919.

80. Ibid., 12 January 1920.

sooner or later lead to a British surrender.[81] Zaghlūl's decision was strengthened by the reports which he continuously received from ᶜAbdel Raḥmān Fahmī, who assured him of the determination of the nation to support the policy of complete independence.[82]

The Mission left Egypt early in March 1920, and ᶜAdlī joined the Wafd in Paris a month later. Under pressure from his colleagues and ᶜAdlī, and in an attempt to preserve the unity of the Wafd, Zaghlūl reluctantly accepted a formal invitation from Milner to meet him in London. Milner's emissary to Zaghlūl, a member of the Mission wrote:

> "[Zaghlūl] showed considerable obstinacy but it seemed to me that both Adly and Ahmed Lutfy el Said and Mohammad Mahmud, who were both with him, were doing their best to persuade him to come to London without making difficulties".[83]

Before proceeding to London, Zaghlūl sent three of his colleagues to explore the bases on which an agreement could be reached. And on receiving their favourable impressions he decided to embark on the negotiations.

The British attitude during the discussions was

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81. Ibid., 14 January 1920.

82. Fahmī's Memoirs, file no. 9, p. 760.

83. F.O. 371/4984, C.J.B. Hurst to Milner, 20 May 1920.

dominated by Milner's earlier determination that,

> "I do not for a moment contemplate any Treaty, Convention or bargain with Egypt in substitution for the Protectorate. What I do think worth considering is, whether the definition of our several powers and duties in relation of Protecting and Protected Power might not take the form of an Agreement, to which we should both be parties, rather than a Ukase of ours. Of course their agreement would be 'camouflage'. They would only agree, because they could not help themselves. Still from the point of view of 'saving face', it would make a great difference to them if they could call their acceptance of our terms a Treaty of Alliance or something of the kind".[84]

In the course of his conversations with the Egyptian delegation and in the memorandum he submitted to ᶜAdlī in August 1920, which embodied the British proposals for a settlement, Lord Milner adhered to this policy.[85] Moreover, he rejected the recommendations made by the Egyptian delegation which demanded the abolition of the Protectorate and the system of Capitulations, the restriction of the powers of the British officials in the Egyptian service, and the withdrawal of the British troops to the Canal zone. Inevitably, a

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84. Milner's Papers, Box 162, Milner to Curzon, 10 December 1919.

85. For the minutes of Zaghlūl-Milner Conversations see F.O. 848/20, 22 and 26; also Zaghlūl's Memoirs, Notebooks nos. 36, 37 and 39.

deadlock was reached, but, with the exception of Zaghlūl who decided to return to Egypt, the other members of the Wafd encouraged by ʿAdlī and Milner favoured the continuation of the discussions on the basis of Milner's project. Zaghlūl then agreed to compromise with his colleagues. He, however, insisted that before the resumption of the conversations, the views of the nation and especially the members of the Legislative Assembly and the Provincial Councils on the proposed scheme should be heard.[86] Furthermore, he plainly cautioned the Wafdists in Cairo that the acceptance of Milner's project would in effect be the endorsement of the Protectorate in the disguise of a "Treaty of Alliance".[87] Subsequently, the consultations in Cairo which took place during September and October 1920, strengthened Zaghlūl's hand. A consensus of opinion emerged favouring the acceptance of Milner's proposals provided that a number of substantial modifications were introduced. These included demands for the abolition of the Protectorate and Consular Courts, the restriction of the functions of the Financial and Judicial Advisers, and the modification of the Capitu-

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86. Zaghlūl's Memoirs, Notebook no. 30, 15 August 1920.

87. Fahmī's Memoirs, file no. 10, Zaghlūl to Nahhās, ʿAfīfī and Wasif, 22 August, 1920, pp. 1016-1018.

lations with a view to enabling Egypt in the future to legislate for the foreign residents.[88] Lord Milner refused to alter his programme, but agreed to recommend in his report to the British Government the negotiation of a treaty which would take into consideration the reservations submitted by Zaghlūl. At the same time, he warned that this would considerably prejudice the chances of reaching an agreement acceptable to Britain.[89]

Following the failure of the discussions, the founding members of the Wafd supported ʿAdlī's suggestion for the formation of a Government which would negotiate an agreement on the basis of Milner's recommendations. Zaghlūl rejected ʿAdlī's proposal and emphasised that the Wafd was the only authoritative body to conduct such negotiations.[90]

By then the disagreement in the leadership of the Wafd was well under way. Zaghlūl boycotted the meetings of the Wafd in Paris,[91] and refused despite the appeals of the Central Committee to publish a denial of

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88. Zaghlūl's Memoirs, Notebook no. 39, 19 October 1920.

89. F.O. 898/20, Minutes of Meeting with the Egyptian Delegation, 25 October 1920.

90. Zaghlūl's Memoirs, Notebook no. 39, 10 January 1921.

91. ʿAllūba, p. 130.

the reports reaching Cairo that a division had occured.[92] To counter ᶜAdlī's efforts, he stated that in any future negotiations the Wafd should retain the effective leadership and form the majority of the Egyptian negotiating team.[93] On 9 March 1921, Zaghlūl decided to return to Egypt to mobilise his supporters against ᶜAdlī's newly-formed Government and the dissedent Wafdists. On his arrival in Alexandria on April 4, Zaghlūl made public his conditions for negotiations. ᶜAdlī's contacts with him failed to produce any change in his position, and after several meetings of the Wafd, the moderate members while declaring their full confidence in the Government blamed Zaghlūl for the split in the Wafd.[95] Zaghlūl retorted by expelling them from the movement and announced that in view of the fact that the present Government was the creation of the High Commissioner, its negotiations with Britain would only be a case where "George V will be negotiating George V".[96] Thus the unity of the Wafd ended.

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92. Zaghlūl's Memoirs, Notebook no. 39, 1-4 February 1921.
93. Ibid., 18 March 1921.
94. Ibid., 19 March 1921.
95. ᶜAllūba, p. 153.
96. F.O. 371/6295, Allenby to F.O., 27 April 1921.

The majority of the dissenting members were Zaghlūl's old colleagues in the Legislative Assembly, and former members of the 'Ummah Party. Their emergence at the head of the nationalist movement at the end of the War did not mark a change in their traditional attitude towards the occupation. Their main concern was to restore the position of social and political prominence which they enjoyed before the establishment of the Protectorate. Consequently, as the British authorities proceeded to normalise the situation in Egypt and offered to meet their demands, they readily abandoned the radical variant of their movement led by Zaghlūl and joined hands with the occupation. Before embarking on his negotiations with Earl Curzon, during the second half of 1921, ᶜAdlī was afforded every possible support to facilitate his mission and discredit Zaghlūl. Allenby urged his Government to accept Egypt's claim for the appointment of diplomatic representatives in foreign capitals.[97] On 22 February, the High Commissioner was authorised to inform the Sultan that the ᴮritish Government "arrived at the conclusion that the status of protectorate is not a satisfactory relation in which Egypt should

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97. F.O. 371/6292, Allenby to Curzon, 12 January 1921.

continue to stand to Great Britain".[98] At the request of ᶜAdlī Yeghen, the Commissioner recommended the lifting of the press censorship.[99] Furthermore, with a view to strengthening the position of ᶜAdlī's Government "who really wish for a settlement and give them some backing to control Zaghlūl and extremists", Allenby demanded the despatch of British warships to Alexandria.[100] Finally, in contrast to Milner's uncompromising attitude towards Zaghlūl, the new British proposals which included the abolition of the Protectorate and the establishment of Egyptian control over the Department of Foreign Affairs, were unquestionably more generous. They were made with the intention of facilitating ᶜAdlī's mission and at the same time undermining Zaghlūl's position.[101]

However, despite these concessions, ᶜAdlī recognised the limitations of his support among Egyptians. He freely admitted during the conversations that the terms of the proposed treaty would not receive the

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98. Ibid., Curzon to Allenby, 22 February 1921.

99. F.O. 371/6395, Allenby to Curzon, 10 May 1921.

100. F.O. 371/6294, Allenby to Curzon, 8 April 1921.

101. F.O. 371/6307, 'Memorandum of Clauses of a Suggested Convention between G. Britain and Egypt', November 1921.

acceptance of Egypt's public opinion.[102] He therefore recommended that Britain should unilaterally put the draft treaty into operation.[103] At the insistence of Allenby and four of his senior advisers in the Egyptian service, who threatened to resign, the British Cabinet agreed to endorse ᶜAdlī's suggestion. In February 1922, Allenby made a declaration to this effect. The Protectorate was thus abolished and Egypt's nominal independence recognised. Two years later, the first Egyptian Parliament after the War met. Unlike the position of the 'Ummah Party in the Legislative Assembly ten years earlier, the representatives of the Liberal Constitutionalists Party were in a minority in thenew Parliament. By virtue of its entrenched position in the rural and urban areas, the Wafd had become a major political force in the country. Until such time as Britain were able to come to terms with its aspirations, a treaty with Egypt could not be concluded.

To conclude then, the nationalist rebellion of 1919, reflected the growing dissatisfaction of the different classes in Egyptian Society with the British

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102. For the minutes of the ᶜAdlī-Curzon Negotiations, see F.O. 371/6310.

103. F.O. 371/6307, Curzon to Allenby, 19 November 1921.

occupation and the existing system of Government. Occupied by the pressing military requirements of the War, the British authorities in Egypt did not only overlook the economic and political interests of the class of provincial notables, but implemented a number of measures which intensified the grievances of the middle classes (the lower sections of the class of large landowners, the rural middle class, the majority of Government employees, professionals, and retail merchants), the workers, and the small peasants.

In the first instance, the Wafd represented the movement of the 'Ummah Party seeking a return to the pre-war situation, when a Legislative Assembly existed and the relative freedom of individuals and the press were guaranteed. But as the British Government refused, under the pressure of the War, to listen to the moderate demands of Egypt, the Wafd increasingly became the rallying point for the expression of the demand for complete independence. This eventually resulted in the break away of the majority of the prominent members of the 'Ummah Party from the Wafd, and the formation of the Liberal Constitutionalists Party with its organ the Siyāsah newspaper.

CONCLUSION

The British occupation of Egypt in 1882, gradually introduced profound changes in the political and social system of the country. Under the Consul-Generalship of Lord Cromer Egypt witnessed the decline in the powers of its traditional sovereign and the emergence of a new Egyptian political elite representing the political and economic interests of the class of provincial notables. The new system of Government not only consolidated the economic position of the large landowners, but enabled a group of local political notables, who were interested in securing an arrangement with the Controlling Power to settle at the top of the indigenous political hierarchy. Consequently the majority of the members of this group acquired positions of influence in the administration and established their predominant control over the self-governing institutions which the occupation authorities devised to rule the country.

This process was given impetus by the increasing reliance of the British authorities on the support of the propertied classes, who since the occupation of Egypt were given "the impression that we intend to

exert our influence through them rather than directly assume the government of the country ourselves".[1]

Therefore, ultimately the basis of the political power and ideological orientation of the emerging elite was twofold: an established economic and legal position in the country itself; and a relationship with a Great Power. However, partly governed by their relationship with Britain, and partly opposed to any fundamental structural changes in the existing social order and political system of the country, the new governing elite were neither able to transform themselves into a leadership elite nor even perceive of their role that way.

In fact whenever the development of events in Egypt threatened to undermine the basis of their political pre-eminence, they moved in concert with the British occupation to meet the challenge. In close alliance with Lord Cromer, the new elite of local political notables checked the Khedive's attempts to restore part of the political influence which he and his predecessors had lost to Britain. Similarly, in 1907, they reacted to the growing Panislamic and

1. Wingate's Papers, Box 237, Wingate to R. Graham, 28 May 1917.

Patriotic sentiment in the country following the Ṭaba and Dinshwai Incidents by publishing the daily al-Jarīdah to propound their views and by organising themselves in the 'Ummah Party.

At other times, however, their position under the pressure of circumstances appeared to suffer as a result of a temporary decline in their relationship with Britain. The conclusion of a friendly understanding between Cromer's successor and the Khedive, to the advantage of the latter, tended to jeopardize the political interests of the 'Ummah Party. The members of the new elite, in an effort to safeguard and promote their influence advocated the extension of the powers of the self-governing institutions which they controlled and demanded a constitution. However, these demands did not amount in any way to a change in the nature of the 'Ummah-Jarīdah group, which remained loyally committed to the preservation of the existing system of Government and to their role as a ruling elite.

During the First World War a more serious setback to their political influence occurred. The establishment of the new system of Protectorate not only violated the old maxim of Britain's policy towards

Egypt, namely that of governing the country indirectly, but also deprived Britain's local allies from the political privileges which they had enjoyed since the beginning of the British occupation. Consequently in co-operation with the Egyptian sovereign, the members of the 'Ummah Party sought to change the Protectorate and revert to a system of government similar to that which existed before the War. However, their efforts were largely unsuccessful.

In November 1918, at the instigation of Sultan Fu'ād and under the leadership of Sa^{c}d Zaghlūl, a former Minister and the elected Vice-President of the Legislative Assembly, the leading members of the 'Ummah Party formed the Wafd movement to put before Britain Egypt's demand for self-government. However, by that time the emerging rural and middle classes which were keenly interested in achieving the political independence of the country, and which constituted the bulk of the organised and politically conscious supporters of the movement, offered the founding members of the Wafd an opportunity to transform their role into that of an effective leadership elite. Instead the leadership of the new movement, with the exception of Zaghlūl and some of his more radical supporters opted

for the restoration of its traditional relationship with Britain, welcomed the abolition of the Protectorate, and accepted the establishment of a constitutional Government under British tutelage. Eventually the compromising faction of the movement left the Wafd and formed the Liberal Constitutionalists Party.

Though in the final analysis the Occupying Power chose to rely on the support of its old ally, namely the governing elite of local political notables, Britain's dilemma in Egypt was not resolved. The Wafd which by the early 1920s embodied the growing social and political influence of the Egyptian middle classes had become a permanent political reality in the country. It formed the basis for the emergence of a more popular and independent political leadership with which the Occupying Power had first to reach an understanding before it could finally legitimise its presence in Egypt.

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